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THE WORKS
OF
SHOSHEE CHUNDER DUTT.

SECOND SERIES.

IMAGINATIVE, DESCRIPTIVE, AND METRICAL.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

I. A VISION OF SUMERU, AND OTHER POEMS.

II. REMINISCENCES OF A KERÁNI'S LIFE.

"Very true, my lord," replied the physician; "however, I am of opinion that you ought not to eat of these rabbits, as being a hairy, furry, sort of food; nor would I have you taste that veal. Indeed, if it were neither roasted nor parboiled, something might be said; but, as it is, it must not be."

"Well, then," said Sancho, "what think you of this huge dish here that smokes so? I take it to be an olla-podrida; and that, being a hodge-podge of so many sorts of viands, sure I cannot but light upon something here that will tickle me, and be both wholesome and toothsome."—*Don Quixote.*

LONDON:
LOVELL REEVE AND CO.,
5, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

1885.

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For my own part, notwithstanding the general malevolence,
towards those who communicate their thoughts in print, I cannot but
look with a friendly regard on such as do it, provided there is no
tendency in their writings to vice and profaneness. If the thoughts
of such authors have nothing in them, they, at least, do no harm,
and show an honest industry, and a good intention in the composer.

ADDISON, - *Freeholder*, No. 40.

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TO THE MEMORY
OF THE
WELL-BELOVED DEAD,
LONG LOST, NEVER FORGOTTEN,
THESE VOLUMES
ARE MOST AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

A FEW AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL REMARKS BY WAY OF PREFACE.

THERE is nothing I could say of myself that the world would care to know of, and it did appear doubtful to me whether any personal sketch in regard to so poor an author was worth writing out. But since I am now forcing on the public a complete collection of my writings, it would perhaps render that collection all the more intelligible if a short history of the several works comprised in it were simultaneously given ; and I propose to confine my autobiographical remarks to such a statement only, and shall be eminently thankful if the reader will bear with me to that extent.

I was born on the 26th April, 1824 : father's name Pittumber Dutt; grandfather's name Nilmoney Dutt, commonly called Nelloo Dutt, a man of mark in his day.

I was placed in school in my eighth year, and left college in my eighteenth, so that the period for which I was under regular training was ten years only, which will account for all the defects in my writings that my readers may stumble over.

I entered public service in January, 1842, and remained

in it till April, 1873, or over a period of thirty-one years, commencing life on a salary of Rs. 80, or 8*l.* per mensem, and terminating my official career on a salary of Rs. 600, which gave me a retiring pension of Rs. 295.

My private studies were kept up throughout the whole of this period, and I read a great many books, though in a rather loose and desultory manner. I began to scribble at about the same time that I entered the service of the Government, writing short historical tales for the Saturday-evening newspapers, based on passages picked out from such works as Tod's *Annals of Rajasthán*, Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattás*, Malcolm's *Report on Central India*, and the like. These tales were originally published under the *nom de plume* of J. A. G. Barton, and will now be found collected under the head of "The Tales of Yore," in Vol. III. of the present series.

Almost simultaneously with the publication of these Tales were issued the greater portion of the Poems, which were subsequently collected, first, as "Miscellaneous Verses," in a volume dedicated by permission to the late Countess of Dalhousie, and afterwards under their present designation of "A Vision of Sumeru and Other Poems." Some of these poems—the *Indian Ballads* in particular—received a great deal more of attention at the time of publication than they could have really merited, being noticed with favour by such men as the late Sir Cecil Beadon (then Mr. Beadon, Secretary to the Board of Revenue), Sir Arthur Hobhouse (then Mr. Hobhouse, Assistant Sub-Treasurer), and other gentlemen of similar status and position.

My first Essay in Prose was on "Hindu Caste," which was written in competition of a prize offered by the Calcutta Tract Society, in 1849. The prize was carried

off by the Rev. Mr. Bowers of Tanjore; but two other essays were also favourably reported upon by the adjudicators, namely, one by the Rev. K. M. Banerjee, and my paper, to which an additional prize was awarded. The latter was printed in the *Christian Observer* for January and February, 1851, and, being reprinted therefrom, was favourably noticed by several of the local newspapers, and, among others, by the *Friend of India* (then edited by Mr. John Clarke Marshman, the historian), from which the following eulogium is extracted:—

“*An Essay on Hindu Caste*—Such is the name of a very unpretending little pamphlet of forty-seven pages, which received a second prize from the gentlemen appointed to adjudicate the reward lately offered for the best essay on Caste. The author is said to be Báboo Shoshee Chunder Dutt, and the English is of that remarkably pure and idiomatic character which characterises almost all the writings of that family. It differs from the majority of the pamphlets published by Young Bengal, in that it contains neither abuse nor declamation. The writer has accepted Caste as it really is, viz. a great and injurious fact, and, after a few words about its origin and progress, proceeds to point out its more prominent evils in strong and appropriate language We have left no space for extracts, but it would be unjust to the author not to quote his refutation of the common argument, that the Hindu Castes differ but little from the European social grades. . . . The refutation is complete, and we question whether it would have been better written by an educated Englishman.”—*Friend of India*, 6th March, 1851.

My next Essay was on “Vedantism,” also written in competition of a prize offered by the Tract Society. On this occasion, too, as on the first, I was so far unsuccessful that the prize was carried off by the Rev. Dr. Mullens; but the adjudicators spoke of my paper in such terms as emboldened me to convert it into an article for *Saunders’ Magazine*, a periodical then recently started.

in Delhi, and it was published in its numbers for March and April, 1852, and was handsomely paid for.

My Essay on "Young Bengal" was published in the same magazine for May and June, 1853, and that on "Women in India" also in the last-named number. The Essay on "Hindu Female Education" was similarly published in *Ledlie's Miscellany* (Agra) for July and August, 1853, while the papers on the "Religious Mendicants of India," the "Popular Superstitions of the Hindus," and "Home Life in Bengal," were contributed to the Calcutta Saturday-evening newspapers in 1856 and 1857. Besides these Essays I also contributed an article on "Vedantism" to the *Calcutta Review* for June, 1852, one on the "Ancient Cities of the World" to the number for December, 1853, of the same periodical, one on "Mahomedan Rule in India" to its number for September, 1854, and one on "Pouránism" to its number for June, 1855. All these Essays, excepting that on the "Ancient Cities of the World," having subsequently been wholly rewritten, were, with some new chapters, linked together under the general designation of *India, Past and Present*, and republished in 1880.

The first collection of my essays was made in 1854, and was noticed in *Blackwood's Magazine*, from which the following extract may be here quoted :—

"The picture of zenání life afforded by our author is new, valuable, and complete. Even in India we believe no European, previous to the publication of this essay (Essay on 'Women in India'), had any correct notion of this matter. In this country we are sure that, beyond a vague picture of latticed stone-work and hooka-smoking, not one person in a million has ever attempted to form a notion of it."—*Blackwood's Magazine*, for June, 1854.

The reviews of the local Press were also very favourable;

but I must content myself by giving one short extract only from one of them.

"The active curiosity of good Abbé Dubois, the irrepressible thirst for information of the missionary Ward, only obtained dim and distorted glimpses of the domestic life of the natives; but here we have the very thing from the very best authority."—*Delhi Gazette*, 11th February, 1854.

Previous to this, in March, 1853, I received from Mr. Cecil Beadon, then Secretary to the Government of Bengal, an appointment in the Secretariat, to which I remained attached to the end of my official career; and all my energies were so continuously devoted to the work of this office, both in and out of office hours, that I was, during the whole of this period, forced to estrange myself, if not from my books, at least from the itch for scribbling to which I had hitherto been so partial. In this office I had for several years to write the *Annual Administration Reports* of the Government (which are now compiled by a covenanted officer), and all especial notes on subjects of primary importance that came up for consideration, besides especial reports like the "Mutiny Narratives," which were published in the Blue Books of the House of Commons, the "Cyclone Narratives," etc. I remained in the Secretariat for twenty years, and did as good service as I was capable of, with an obstinate perseverance which, I maintain, has seldom been equalled, never surpassed. But my official life was a mistake, the name of *Kerúni* carrying its own condemnation with it. My services were not appreciated, except at intervals by such Governors as Sir Cecil Beadon and Sir William Grey, the former of whom, on one of the annual *Administration Reports* being completed, was pleased to record his thanks to me in the Proceedings of the Government, coupling my

name with those of the Secretary, Mr. Eden, and the Under-Secretary, Mr. Geoghegan ; while the latter tried on various occasions to better my *status* and position, and to get for me a higher appointment in some other office. Eventually I retired from the service in disgust during the administration of Sir George Campbell, to whom I applied for a special pension, which was refused to me. The circumstance of my retirement was noticed in the *Hindu Patriot* in the following terms :—

“EUROPEAN v. BENGALI.

“The *Calcutta Gazette* of the 2nd instant announced the retirement of Báboo Shoshee Chunder Dutt from the public service, and the succession of Báboo Brohmonath Sen to the office of Head Assistant of the Bengal Secretariat. The circumstances connected with the retirement of Báboo Shoshee Chunder deserve to be placed on record, if only as a warning to, and for the information of Keránidom at large. We have heard several accounts of it; they all agree in the main facts, which are as under.

“The Bengal Office was, till recently, divided into four principal departments, viz. Judicial, Revenue, Political, and General, with a Head Assistant in charge of each; two of the Head Assistants being Bengalis, and the other two Europeans. As usual—perhaps fortuitously—the charge of the two heavier and more important departments, viz. the Judicial and the Revenue, was held by the native Head Assistants. Báboo Shoshee Chunder was Head Assistant of the Revenue Department. The two European Head Assistants, at an earlier period of their career in the office, had worked under him in a subordinate capacity, but now enjoyed equality of position.

“In the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Sejanus shaped the destinies of the Roman Empire. We beg pardon, we were speaking of the Bengal Office. Well, the Sejanus there in authority wished to introduce certain changes, and the appointment of Mr. Jones to the Small Cause Court give him the opportunity to do this. A covenanted officer having been appointed to succeed Mr. Jones, some of his minor duties—such as opening covers and the like—were assigned to the two European Head Assistants (i.e. those in charge of the

lighter departments), and for this additional remuneration was promised to them. Shoshee Báboo urged that he was senior to both of them, that they had both at one time worked under him, that so long as there was equality of position he had not complained, but that to disturb that equality in their favour would necessarily disgrace him in the estimation alike of those in the office and the outside public. He urged strongly that he had not merited this, and that if it were insisted upon there would remain no alternative for him but to solicit permission to retire. He had asked to retire a year before on account of bad eyes, but this was then objected to on the ground that his services could not be spared. He begged that no such objection may now be made.

" Sejanus agreed. He alluded to Shoshee Báboo's services in very flattering terms, but said that the arrangements referred to had been made after mature consideration. He added that he would be sorry to lose the Báboo's services, but, if he had made up his mind to retire, he would not object to it, though his loss, etc., etc., etc.

" The application for pension was thereupon submitted, accompanied by a certificate from the Medical Board of defective eye-sight, incessant work in the office and at home by candle-light having brought on incipient cataract of the eyes. Sejanus, who had before agreed to the Báboo's retirement, is said to have now complained unto Tiberius that the Báboo had suddenly thrown up his appointment on account of arrangements which had received imperial sanction. The Báboo was telegraphed for from Belvedere. We hear on all hands that his reception was extremely kind. The Lieutenant-Governor pressed him very much to remain in office; but the Báboo had chosen his course; the last straw had broken the camel's back. In a service of some thirty-four years he had not been absent for so many as thirty-four days; even sickness and pain could scarcely keep him away from what he had all along considered to be his paramount duty—the service of the State: but all this devotion had not been appreciated. He had felt the blow too severely to be able to urge all this; in fact he had no disposition to urge anything more now: and in reply to the Lieutenant-Governor's pressure he only referred to the medical certificate as an imperative order that left him no alternative but to retire.

" Mr. Campbell assented.

" On the force of his testimonials Shoshee Báboo had applied for a special pension, which is grantable under a certain section of

the pension rules as a reward for "unusually meritorious service." Shoshee Báboo's services had been acknowledged as such by successive Lieutenant-Governors and Secretaries. Sir Frederick Halliday was aware of his merits, and frequently took notice of him; Sir John Peter Grant was much pleased with his work; Sir Cecil Beadon thanked him especially in a minute printed and recorded among the Proceedings of Government; Sir William Grey proposed to the Government of India the appointment of two Native Assistant Secretaries, Shoshee Báboo being one of the nominees. These were strong testimonies in his favour; and the Lieutenant-Governor admitted that his services were valuable: but he still held that no case was made out for a special pension. The rule referred to had been applied in several instances on prior occasions; but always in favour of Europeans and East Indians. There is no instance on record¹ of its having been made applicable to the case of a Bengali. It is to be understood from this that 'an unusually meritorious service,' like several other things, is a preserve for particular classes of servants, and is not renderable by a Bengali; and, as Mr. Campbell is a plain-spoken man, we would not be surprised to hear that he has recommended to the Government of India the insertion of an explanatory note after the rule to this effect.

"Here then is the instance of an officer of some thirty-four years' service, of an admittedly superior order, being first wantonly insulted by unjust supersession, and then sent away with an ordinary pension and any amount of kind words—to gild the injustice done to him. This, we say unto Keránidom, is what the best of you may expect. For old and invalid European and Eurasian servants there be 'special pensions,' and, better still, 'sinecure appointments, which require the use neither of eyes nor brains; but for the Bengali there is nothing beyond what cannot absolutely be refused under the rules—with any amount of sugar-plums that his stomach will digest."—*Hindu Patriot*, 21st April, 1873.

I was now again at liberty to resume my old scribbling habit, and, in 1874, I published "Bengal" and "Shunkur;" in 1875, the "Ancient World;" and, in 1876, the "Modern World;" all under my old pseudonym of J. A. G. Barton, which had been originally

¹ There was none up to the time referred to.

assumed in 1842. Three out of the four works above-named, that is, all with the exception of the second, together with the "Great Wars of India," originally published in a local periodical named *Mookerjees Magazine*, and the "Ancient Cities of the World," wholly rewritten as the "Ruins of the Old World read as Milestones of Civilisation," were reproduced as *Historical Studies and Recreations* in 1879. They were all, both when first published under a *nom de plume*, and afterwards under my own name, generally very kindly reviewed, but still with this noticeable distinction, that, when supposed to have been written by an Englishman, they were held worthy to be recommended for adoption as school books in England; while, when they appeared under a Bengali name, they were considered to be good only for the perusal of those for whom European history was a difficult and foreign subject, and by such Englishmen as wished to know how certain Indian minds thought about them.

'Instead of speaking of the character of my books myself it would perhaps be more satisfactory to the reader, as it certainly will be to me, to quote the opinions that were expressed of them by the more indulgent of my reviewers; and I proceed to do so accordingly.

THE ANCIENT WORLD.

"We know no work which, in the compass of some three hundred and forty small pages, gives so clear and well-informed a critical narrative of præ-Christian times as this. It should be studied by all teachers of history, if only to provoke them to research and reading on their own account, and to show the proper place of Asia in early civilisation. . . . The peculiar merit of the book is, that it gives fairly and succinctly the latest results of historical investigation into the history of præ-Christian empires."—*Edinburgh Daily Review*, 11th June, 1875.

"Mr. Barton's 'Ancient World,' though not primarily designed as a school book, may very well be used in that capacity. . . . The chief ideas which emerge from a wide survey are distinctly brought forward, and we can heartily recommend the book."—*Westminster Review* for July, 1875.

"Outside of an Encyclopædia it would not be easy to find a book presenting such a mass of information in so accessible and readable a form. There is abundant evidence in it of wide reading and painstaking comparison and deduction."—*Scotsman*, 7th May, 1875.

"In times like the present, when books of all kinds are so rapidly multiplying, a work of this nature, which in a popular sense serves to anchor the mind in the solid substance of human history, cannot but be beneficial. It contains all that is requisite for the stimulation of a healthy study of the subject, and the reader who will pursue all the ramifications it sketches and suggests will be well stored with knowledge."—*Liverpool Daily Albion*, 10th May, 1875.

THE MODERN WORLD.

"He carries his readers with him to a point whence the whole course of modern history is brought clearly within the field of vision. . . . His book is excellently adapted to be used in the higher classes of schools. We know no other elementary compendium of modern history which can at all compare with it."—*Scotsman*, 11th February, 1876.

"It is not a school book, for it omits all those details which fasten on a young learner's mind. It is rather a book which endeavours to show the advanced student the relative value of what he has learned."—*Westminster Review* for October, 1876.

"Whoever wants to read facts of history placed in true focus, national struggles for greatness, military convulsions, the unification of power and the consolidation of monarchies, popular struggles for freedom, and the sweeping changes which have come over human society, should peruse the 'Modern World.'"—*British Mail*, 29th April, 1876.

"This is a truly practical book, the value of which cannot fail to be made extensively felt wherever it may obtain the circulation it claims and well deserves."—*Bell's Weekly Messenger*, 26th February, 1876.

"This will prove a very serviceable book to students. . . . The

chapters on 'Great Britain,' the 'United States of America,' 'France,' and 'Germany,' are especially good. Mr. Barton has certainly given us, in a moderate amount of space, quite a library-full of information."—*Civil Service Gazette*, 5th February, 1876.

"The grown-up man or woman with little time for exclusive reading will find in the 'Modern World' a succinct résumé of the information expected to be possessed by every member of society."—*Edinburgh Courant*, 11th February, 1876.

"So much of the world's history could hardly be given with more accurate brevity and with the same really graphic distinctness."—*Liverpool Weekly Albion*, 4th March, 1876.

"This is writing that recommends itself, and therefore, to teachers of our youths who teach history for its own sake, with no proclivities, Liberal or Conservative, we strongly recommend it."—*Glasgow Herald*, 3rd July, 1876.

BENGAL.

"A well-written account of an important portion of our Indian Empire. . . . It is in every way eminently readable, and the chapter upon the effects of British rule is judicial and significant."—*Westminster Review* for January, 1875.

"The inquiring reader will do well to read and digest the contents of a volume compiled by an evident master of his subject."—*Allen's Indian Mail*, 19th December, 1874.

"The author evidently writes from personal observation. . . . Hence the attractive character of the work, which is at once descriptive and historical, and some chapters of which are so happily written that they read like an interesting romance."—*Glasgow News*, 9th December, 1874.

"Because Mr. Barton's book is thoroughly practical in its outcome, and grasps the matters most intimately related to the stability and progress of our Indian empire, we heartily commend it to the attention of our readers."—*Edinburgh Courant*, 2nd December, 1874.

A few extracts from the notices taken of the *Historical Studies and Recreations*, which were published in my own name, may now be quoted.

"His books ought to have a great success among those for whom

European history is a difficult and foreign subject, and may be studied with great advantage by such Europeans as wish to know how the best Indian minds think about us."—*Westminster Review*, for July, 1879.

"Whether we regard these volumes as chapters of history or as essays, we have no hesitation in pronouncing them to be a most wonderful monument to their author's learning, ability, and patriotism."—*Civil Service Gazette*, 3rd May, 1879.

"*Historical Studies and Recreations* cover a wide field of investigation, and bear witness to a capacity for independent research, guided by a thoughtful intelligence, and by careful and comprehensive instruction."—*Daily News* (London), 29th July, 1879.

"His reading must have been immense; and he has not only digested it, but annotated dull books as he read, forming his conclusions precisely where independent judgment is most difficult."—*Nonconformist*, 9th July, 1879.

"For the extent and variety of its information Mr. Dutt's work, in its present completed form, deserves a place in the library."—*Dublin University Magazine*, for June, 1879.

"His own country he knows thoroughly well; and for what he says of it he may rightly lay claim to respectful attention."—*Saturday Review*, 21st June, 1879.

I would here quote at some greater length from a notice in the *Indian Daily News*, which was particularly discriminating and kind.

"In the first volume S. C. Dutt has admirably condensed in terse and clear language the leading events in the history of the world from the earliest times to the present, in the course of which the author gives evidence of wide reading and independent thinking. This volume forms an excellent historical compendium, which will be very serviceable to those whose leisure does not admit of the study of more lengthy treatises; and it might with propriety be substituted by the Senators of the Calcutta University for that nightmare of a book, 'Taylor's Ancient History,' which continues to muddle the brains, and drive to the verge of distraction candidates for the First Arts.

"To all who have any interest in the customs, habits, and social condition of the people of Bengal, S. C. Dutt's 'Account' (of that Province) will be most interesting and instructive.

"The 'Great Wars of India' form not the least interesting portion of this volume. . . . This sketch is notable for those qualities of clearness and condensation, combined with naturalness and ease, which are characteristic of S. C. Dutt's literary productions. . . .

"The last part of the second volume, 'The Ruins of the Old World' . . . gives the results of wide and varied reading in his usual happy style."—*Indian Daily News*, 30th October, 1879.

India, Past and Present, also published in my own name, called forth, among others, the following notices from the British Press :—

"This is a trebly-interesting book—interesting for its subject matter, for the lucid and elegant style in which it is written, and for being the work of a well-informed native of India. . . . No British reader can rise from the perusal of this instructive volume without having derived from it much valuable information respecting our Indian fellow subjects, without feeling a livelier concern in their history, and without experiencing a strong desire to have their condition improved," etc.—*Civil Service Gazette*, 20th March, 1880.

"Baboo Dutt is evidently at home with his subject, which he must have studied from various standpoints, and not only as a member of the many races with which that historical continent is peopled, but as one who views its varying conflicting interests as a judge weighs and considers the evidence placed before him by contending parties. There is no phase of Indian life, past or present, with which he is not familiar . . . and it therefore would indeed be strange if his careful inquiry into, and consideration concerning, everything appertaining to India had not this result—a comprehensive and exhaustive treatise."—*Society*, 12th March, 1880.

"Shoshee Chunder Dutt is one of those native gentlemen who write the English language with a clearness and purity which many Englishmen may envy. His style is indeed singularly attractive, while his matter is full of information. . . . The author knows his own countrymen thoroughly, and describes their mental, social, and religious condition from the standpoint of a patriotic reformer. . . . The work demands, as it deserves, close study by all those who desire to possess accurate knowledge about the inner

thoughts and life of the millions who obey our rule in the East."—*Broad Arrow*, 20th March, 1880.

"His English style is purer and stronger than that of many well-known writers 'to the manner born.' . . . Anybody who wishes to have a knowledge of our present relations with India, the conditions under which we administer this vast dependency, and the difficulties we are likely to encounter in the future, cannot do better than read this book."—*Scotsman*, 31st March, 1880.

"Mr. Dutt is an industrious writer. . . . He is also an industrious thinker; and much of what he says is well deserving of attention. . . . He shows that he has carefully studied the past history and present condition of India, and that his knowledge of the habits and wants of the people justifies his speaking with authority on many questions of practical importance On subjects of this nature Mr. Dutt's remarks are always judicious, and his arguments are urged with a force and clearness which entitle them to the serious attention of his readers."—*Saturday Review*, 2nd October, 1880.

The *Indian Daily News* and the *Statesman and Friend of India* referred to the book in the following terms :—

"*India, Past and Present*, is a series of twenty essays on historical, religious, social, and family development and life of the Indian people, written by a native gentleman, who writes with the practised ease and grace of an educated Englishman, with a minuteness and exactness of knowledge which few non-members of native Indian society could have any pretensions to."—*Indian Daily News*, 9th July, 1880.

"*India, Past and Present*, is one of those books which could only be written by a cultured native of India, whose command of language and facility of expression would do no discredit to many who have made literature a profession."—*Statesman and Friend of India*, 19th November, 1881.

Appended to *India, Past and Present*, was an essay on "Taxation in India" (now included in Vol. VI., First Series) which was originally contributed to *Fraser's Magazine* for September, 1876, and was spoken of by several of the leading English papers as being "exhaustive" and "masterly." A Mr. Gibson, of the Madras

Civil Service, took exception to it; but his remarks, excluding some personal references to myself, which I can afford not to notice, had nothing in them either to comment upon or to rebut. My views on the salt-tax, which he objected to, were subsequently upheld by the action taken in the matter by the Government of India; and my views in regard to the consumption of rice, which he was also good enough to dispute, were fully vindicated during the Madras famines, when rice, and rice only, was demanded and offered as famine diet, leaving my assailant no leg, nay, not even a wooden stump as an apology for a broken limb to stand upon.

I should also here mention that my novel "Shunkur" (which will be found in Vol. III. of this series) had at one time the misfortune to draw upon it the disapproval of no less an official than a member of the Secretary of State's Council (the late Sir Erskine Perry), who suggested some official inquiries being instituted in respect to the statements contained in it. I quote below the correspondence which I was compelled to enter into with the Government in reference to this matter.

"71, Musjeed-Bâree Street,

"Calcutta,

"16th August, 1878.

"To the Private Secretary to H.H. the Lieut.-Governor of Bengal.

"SIR,—At the audience which the Lieut.-Governor gave me yesterday I was told incidentally that His Honour had received a complaint against me from Sir Erskine Perry, with reference to certain statements in *Bengalianâ*, a work recently published by me.

"The statements objected to are, I understood, in 'Shunkur,' a portion of *Bengalianâ*, which was separately published in England some years ago by Messrs. Sampson Low and Co., on which occasion Sir Erskine Perry probably did not see it, though it was largely reviewed in the English papers.

"If the complaint be a formal and official one, made by a member

of the Secretary of State's Council to the head of the local government, I shall feel much obliged if His Honour will not dispose of it finally without giving me an opportunity to explain.

"'Shunkur' is a *tale*, as I have explained to His Honour, partially founded on historical facts, as such tales usually are, while the best portion of the work is pure fiction only. All the names are of course fictitious; I put in whatever names occurred to me at the time I was writing the book.

"But still there are statements in it, and if I am required to substantiate them I shall be glad to do so on its being pointed out to me what particular statements I am required to justify. My facts are mainly taken from the Blue Books on the Mutiny published by the House of Commons, a great portion of which, i.e. the Bengal Narratives, were (with the exception of the first three or four, written by Dr. Mouat) prepared by myself.

"If His Honour gives me an opportunity to explain, I solicit that I may be favoured by a loan of the Mutiny Blue Books from some Government library, as I cannot afford to buy them, and indeed do not know if they are easily to be had now, even if I could.

"The English public have all along been habituated to look at one side of the Mutiny picture only. I have ventured to give another side of it also, and I thought I owed it to my country to do so. My surprise is great, therefore, that a man of Sir Erskine Perry's position should have taken offence at it.

"As an old servant of the Government, though retired from the service at present, I consider myself bound to give every explanation that the Government may demand of me; and I think I shall be able to cite chapter and verse for almost every statement I have made, provided the Blue Books I have referred to are made available to me. I am certain that if Sir Erskine Perry had read the Mutiny Blue Books carefully, he would not have been very indignant at what I have written.

"I have, etc.,
" (Signed) SHOSNEE CHUNDER DUTT."

"To Baboo Shoshee Chunder Dutt,

“Rái Bábádoor,

" 71, Musieed-Báree Street.

"Calcutta."

“Belvedere.

"20th August, 1878.

"SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant, and to inform you in reply that His Honour the

Lieut.-Governor will examine your book *Bengalianá* when he has leisure, and, if he sees any necessity for doing so, will then ask you to explain any passages he may think requiring explanation.

"I am, etc.,

"(Signed) H. H. STANSFIELD, Lt.-Col.

"*Private Secretary to the Lieut.-Governor.*"

I did not hear more of the matter afterwards.

It gives me great pleasure to add in this place that *Bengalianá* did not give as much offence to the English public generally as it did to Sir Erskine Perry individually. It was taken as the text-book of a long article in *Fraser's Magazine*, which referred to the work as follows :—

"*Bengalianá* is a book both amusing and instructive," etc.—*Fraser's Magazine*, for January, 1879.

The "Reminiscences of a Keráni's Life," which formed a part of *Bengalianá*, and from which several extracts were given in the article in *Fraser* referred to, were also noticed by the *Examiner* in the following terms :—

"The *Reminiscences of a Keráni's Life* are amusing; and, if space permitted, we would gladly quote a specimen or two. . . . They are exceedingly well written. . . . Mr. Shoshee Chunder Dutt knows English like his mother tongue, and he can wield it with the ease of a practised and accomplished man of letters."—*Examiner*, 13th July, 1878.

I may state in this place that my Poems, too, were very kindly noticed in England, the following being an extract from one of these reviews :—

"The *Vision of Sumeru and other Poems* consists of verses in the style of Walter Scott, and Byron in his earlier years. . . . This book is a specimen of one of the most marked phenomena of the nineteenth century. . . . It is indeed a marvel that he (the author) should have acquired such accuracy of grammatical expression, such purity and taste in the selection of words, and . . .

thrown himself so thoroughly into the spirit of the poets he obviously imitates."—*Athenaeum*, 12th April, 1879.

The *Indian Daily News* spoke of the Poems in the following words :—

"All of them give evidence of anxious skill in the management of English verse, power of imagination, and broad culture. To the bulk of readers, probably, the *Indian Ballads* may be the most interesting portion of the book. Here are mingled together, in easy, flowing, and musical verse, legend and myth. The *Lays of Ancient Greece* contain additional evidence of the author's wide reading ; and the *Miscellaneous Poems* are, as their name implies, varied in character, and quite up to the level of the rest of the volume . . . which, so far as we know, stands alone as the production of a native gentleman in English verse."—*Indian Daily News*, 30th October, 1879.

It remains for me to wind up this desultory account by stating (1) that the works published before as *Historical Studies and Recreations*, and *India, Past and Present*, have been now reproduced as the First, or Historical and Miscellaneous, Series of my Works, the only new book in the collection being that on the "Wild Tribes of India," which was originally published, under the *nom de plume* of Horatio Bickerstaffe Rowney, in 1882 ; and (2) that, similarly, all the Poems and Tales before published have been brought forward anew in the Second Series, with the addition of the "Realities of Indian Life," which first saw light, partly in *Colburn's New Monthly Magazine*, and partly in the *Bengal Magazine*, of Calcuttá ; the novels named the "Young Zemindár" and "Opero Bose," both of which were, like the "Wild Tribes of India," originally published under the pseudonym of H. B. Rowney ; and the few miscellaneous sketches, which make up the last volume.

The "Realities of Indian Life" are based on actual

occurrences narrated in the Nizamut Adawlut Reports of India, and were written under the belief that the inner life of nations and the sudden workings and undercurrents of their nature are best and most accurately illustrated in the history of their crimes ; and the following extract from a letter from the editor of *Colburn's New Monthly Magazine*, dated 24th October, 1878, seems to indicate that they were not unfavourably received, as illustrations, by the English public, on their first publication :—

“ Everybody, I know, has liked the ‘ Reminiscences ’ very much, and even Old Indians have said they give a capital idea of the people.”

The opinions expressed by the British Press of the “ Wild Tribes of India ” and the “ Young Zemindár,” may be given as under :—

THE WILD TRIBES OF INDIA.

“ It was a happy thought which led Mr. Rowney to include in a handy volume of two hundred pages an account of the collective wild tribes, as separated from the civilised populations of India, and he has treated his subject in a most attractive manner. . . . Mr. Rowney’s book is the first popular account of them that has ever been published in this country.”—*Athenaeum*, 30th December, 1882.

“ The book is full of useful and trustworthy information.”—*Graphic*, 24th June, 1882.

“ Mr. Rowney deals with very interesting matter . . . and, as he has evidently spared no pains in collecting trustworthy information, his book would seem to be as valuable as it is readable.”—*Globe*, 28th April, 1882.

THE YOUNG ZEMINDÁR.

“ The author, though he has selected for his scenery the most peaceful province and the least warlike of the races which make up the ‘ Indian People,’ has managed to construct a fairly readable story out of the fates and fortunes of a Bengal zemindár. . . . The

narrative is enlivened and diversified by various philosophical and religious discussions, by legends of gods and demons, and by criticisms on the Rámáyana and the Mahábhárata. . . . Some of the pleasant traits of the natives are fairly brought out," etc.—*Saturday Review*, 13th October, 1883.

"The inundation in the northern provinces of India, in 1833, affords the writer an opportunity for a very good description of the ruin and terror caused by it to the poor native populations. Mr. Rowney's tale contains many moving incidents, and has, moreover, the advantage of treating a comparatively unhackneyed theme. The young zemindár's wanderings will afford much pleasant reading."—*Morning Post*, 22nd September, 1883.

The extracts given from my reviewers speak of my writings in very kindly terms, and I am extremely thankful that they do so. I wrote because it pleased me; I did not write to please a patron, and, in fact, never sought for any. I wrote for my own gratification, to alleviate domestic woes of peculiar severity,

"When on the weary night dawn'd wearier day,
And bitterer wás the grief devour'd alone;"

and I published what I wrote, just as I wrote them, to ascertain the opinions of my betters thereon. Those opinions have been generally not unfavourable; and hence the collection of all my productions in their present form. I did not write for posterity, and have no claims on it. I am amply satisfied with the amount of approbation which my contemporaries have already, so kindly, accorded to me.

SHOSHEE CHUNDER DUTT.

71, Musjeed-Báree Street, Calcuttá.

2nd July, 1885.

A

VISION OF SUMERU, AND OTHER POEMS.

BY

SHIOSHEE CHUNDER DUTT.

Fancy, daughter of the skies,
Thoughts, on wings of light that rise,
Waft my spirit gay and free,
When the storm of passion slumbers,
Far above humanity,
To the Aonian land of numbers,
Where the choirs of music stray ;
Rapture, like a feather'd arrow,
Bursting life's dark prison narrow,
Bears me to the heavens away.

BATIUSHKOV.—Translated by BOWRING.

LONDON :
LOVELL REEVE AND CO.,
5, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN.
1885.

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A VISION OF SUMERU.

IN THREE CANTOS.

CANTO FIRST.

I.

WHERE, rock o'er rock sublimely piled,
 Sumeru¹ braves the sky,
Screen'd in the bosom of the clouds,
An emerald dome uprises high,
Based on the adamantine wild,
Which many an amorous flower enshrouds
 Most lovingly.

II.

There deep-embank'd Mandákini² flows ;
O'er pearls and sapphires rolls that rill :
And fast beside, upon the hill,
The gem-enchâisé palace glows,
The abode of Bruhmá ! haughty lord,
Who makes the Deos tremble all,
 By look, and frown, and word,
When met within that council hall.³

¹ The principal heaven of the Puráns.

² The Ganges, so named in heaven according to the Puráns.

³ Bruhmá is named the *Pitámaha*, or grandfather, of the gods, and is the first of the Hindu triad.

III.

Lord of Devatás ! King supreme !
 Dream'st thou, or wakést wrapt in light,
 Panting upon the unfading bloom
 Of beauty never seen in dream
 By mortal man, whom night
 Enshrouds, with deep malignant gloom,
 From all that's fair and bright ?

IV.

The orient clouds the morn unfold
 Sky-piercing on the mountain's brow,
 And, tinged by soft Aruna's⁴ beam,
 Thy towers outshine the ruddy gold,
 And dazzling bright like mirrors glow.
 Wake, sov'reign of the mead and dell !
 Wake, ruler of the flood and fell !
 Behold if, 'neath tho morning's gleam,
 Earth, sea, and air their incense pay
 To thee, with slow, returning day.

V.

Up started Bruhmá on Sumeru's brow,
 As o'er the snow-clad summit of that hill
 Morn's golden cloud its shadow flung ;
 Up started he, though him constraining
 Beside him yet his spouse there lay,
 Still courting dalliance ; up he sprung :
 The earth and air were still ;
 The sea, beneath the new-born day,

⁴ Charioteer of Surjya, the sun.

Reflected back the fading glow
Of stars, in heaven now waning.

VI.

The citron breathed, the myrrh dropt balm,
The bee sweet nectar stole from flowers ;
But man indifferent pass'd the hours,
To heaven there rose nor prayer nor psalm.
Air, water, earth, from God their birth,
In nature's loveliest vestments smiled ;
But not a living creature there,
Upon the wond'rous world so fair,
With choral voice and incense mild,
Or song of pipe or dulcimer,
Did honour to Sumeru's powers.

VII.

Tempests of black resentment lower'd
Upon the thunderer's⁶ brow and eye,
That unto him no prayer arose
Either from earth or sea.
Burst into flames, ye freighted clouds,
Consume the earth that dares defy
The king of kings, whose might enfolds
Sumeru many-valed and golden-bower'd ;
Burst, lightnings, burst, consume the lea,
And burn the wavy deep that glows
Ungrateful 'neath the morning sky.

⁶ The author has here taken a poet's licence to arm Bruhmá with the thunder. The Puráns represent him only in the character of a scholar, armed with the Veds, and assign the thunder to Indra, a minor deity.

VIII.

O ! who had then his power withstood,
 If, from his mighty hands,
 The furious fires of heaven hurl'd down,
 Had lighted city, mart, and town,
 Grottoes and gardens, trees and lands,
 And dried the ocean flood ?

IX.

But thou, Sar'swati, goddess dread !
 Unmatch'd in loveliness of youth,
 Thou keen-eyed mark'd the danger near,
 Remember'd earth, and wept a tear,
 O'erwhelm'd with sorrow for its doom ;
 Great Bruhmá's consort thou,
 The sharer of his bridal bed,
 What canst thou ask and be denied ?
 The thund'rer's brow is calm and smooth,
 Th' avenging wrath laid low,
 Fled is the scowl of rage and hate
 That heaven and earth defied.

X.

Upon his throne the eternal sire,
 Then sate him slowly down,
 His throne of sandal laid with gold :
 O'er all supreme he sat alone;
 Almighty he, of power untold,
 And bade Pavana⁶ fleet to go
 To all the gods that dwelt enthroned
 In heaven above, or earth below,
 The god of wind, and messenger of heaven.

Or in the caverns ocean-zoned ;
And bid them be assembled all
 In Meru's golden hall,
Nor fail therein for Bruhmá's ire.

xi.

Pavana straight his wings he bound
To waft him fleetly through the air,
He donn'd his golden sandals too,
And, as he stretch'd his pinions wide,
He held the snow-crown'd hills in view,
 Whore heavenly gods reside ;
His flapping wings awoke a sound,
As light he skimm'd through regions rare.

xii.

Kailása,⁷ 'twas thy peak he sought,
Where dwells great Siva free,
Where chill blasts shako the quivering leaves
On spring-fed trees of top sublime,
The stately cedar, and the palm
 Ambrosial fragrance fraught !
He lighted where the mountain heaves
Its deep-fork'd summit to the sky ;
For there Pavana could descry
 The dreaded Lord of Time,
Seated apart on high,
With Gauri⁸ on his knee,
Wiling with love the morning calm.

⁷ The heaven of Siva.

⁸ Gauri, Umá, Párvati, are the several names of Siva's wife ; and the Puráns represent the husband and wife as always making love to each other.

XIII.

Her glowing cheek was on his breast,
 And he on her with fondness hung ;
 Their hands in mutual love comprest,
 As ne'er can be express'd in song.
 There zephyr toy'd, the warbling bird
 Tuned there unto his silent mate,
 And perfumes breathed as leaves were stirr'd :
 Luxuriant leaves, unpruned, elate,
 And wanton grown on branches high ;
 Wheu Siva mark'd the coming feet,
 And, curbing straight the lover's sigh,
 Pavana bold he thus did greet :—

XIV.

“ Pavana, of ambrosial wings,
 Say, wherefore o'er the wide expanse
 Of ether thou hast stray'd ?
 What message from Sumeru's height
 Bear'st thou to me ? Where battle rings,
 And wolves drink blood, with gory lance
 Or dread *trisula* ⁹ keen and bright,
 Does Bruhmá ask my aid ? ”

XV.

The godhead ceased ; and thus to him Pavana
 did reply :
 “ I know not aught of battles grim ;
 But, in his starry dome,
 Great Bruhmá doth thy coming wait ;
 Trident—the favourite weapon of Siva.

And all the gods that rule on high,
 And all beneath the waves that home,
 Must thither haste in state :
 Such is the order given.”

XVI.

He said, and then towards high Vycant¹
 He plied his pinions bold ;
 Nor stopp'd he till he reach'd tho dome,
 Dread Vishnu's adamantine home,
 Of diamond-splinters built, and gold,
 Tipp'd by the sun that beam'd aslant.

XVII.

The dome its silver gates unbarr'd ;
 On lotus bed yet Vishnu lay,
 With Lakshmi² clasp'd within his arms,
 Unconscious of the day :
 Lakshmi won from ocean home,
 When Mándár plough'd the virgin foam,
 By Deos and by giants whirl'd,
 Ere giants had with Deos warr'd ;
 More fair than e'en the fabled three,
 Who met the blooming shepherd boy
 On Ida steep, his kine beside,
 And bade the rustic nothing coy
 Their heavenly graces see,
 And there between them sooth decide
 Who own'd the lovelier charms ;

¹ The heaven of Vishnu.

² The wife of Vishnu.

³ The celebrated churning of the ocean, which forms the subject of H. M. Parker's beautiful poem, the *Draught of Immortality*.

More fair than them was Lakshmi sure,
And ah! perchance, she was more pure.

XVIII.

“Lord of Padmálá!⁴ Vishnu dread!
Arise! for Bruhmá sends me here;
Awake! Náráyan⁵ wake!
This is no time to press the bed,
Of lotus though that bed should be;
For lo! ‘tis council hour,
And, seated in Sumeru’s bower,
Bruhmá awaits for thee,
Thou earth-preserving peer!”⁶
Thus loud Pavana spake.

XIX.

Nor tarried there the god of wind;
To star-deck’d⁷ Indra’s court on high
He fleetly flew, whose bowers of brass
Resounded with the tender lay
Of youthful Apsarás;⁸
There vernal blasts the whole year long,
Responsive to each amorous song,
Through rubied halls for ever play;
And Sachi⁹ of the beauteous eye,

⁴ *Padmálayá*, a name of Lakshmi.

⁵ One of the thousand names of Vishnu.

⁶ Vishnu is the Preserver, Bruhmá the Creator, and Siva the Destroyer of the Universe, according to the Puráns.

⁷ Indra is always represented as marked all over with stars. The story relating to the circumstance will not bear to be repeated.

⁸ The courtesans of heaven.

⁹ The wife of Indra, celebrated for her chastity.

And of the constant mind,
O'er minor gods extends her sway.

XX.

"Ye gods and demi-gods, my message hear,"
Thus spake Pavana to that joyous throng;
"Bruhmá to council summons all:
Purandra¹ first these gods among,
Varuna, king of rain-drops clear,
And Ábju, Bhánu, Nairrit bold,
Kuvera, god of shining gold,
Hasten to Sumeru's hall;
The king of kings there sits alone,
And wants ye all around his throne."

XXI.

This said, along the sounding deep,
Among the windings of the shore,
Stooping from the aerial heights,
Pavana bold his message bore
To gods and genii, such as keep
Their ancient seats beneath the flood,
And such as haunt earth's woods and groves.
Instant they ceased their pranks and fights,
Instant was hush'd their songs and loves,
In ocean-cave, and shady wood,
As each to Bruhmá's summons bow'd.

XXII.

In high Sumeru's golden hall
The gods are met, a glorious band!

¹ Purandra, a name of Indra. Varuna, Ábju, Bhánu, etc., are all subordinate gods of Indra's heaven.

Fair Reti² moves amongst them all,
 The *amrita*³ in her lily hand,
 That grief-divorcing nectar sweet.
 Each quaffs the beverage in his turn,
 And feels a glow within him burn ;
 Till Indra, starting from his seat,
 Thus in bold terms did Bruhmá greet :

XXIII.

“ Say, king of all ! what ‘special need
 Convenes us here, what cause unknown
 Detains from love the Deos free,
 Assembled now before thy throne ?
 We fain would to our sports repair,
 Our wanton sports and luscious fare,
 Inflaming more the more enjoy’d ;
 Then haste, declare thy purpose high,
 And see thy will obey’d.”

XXIV.

To whom the sov’reign thus replied :
 “ Devatás all ! the heavens are fair,
 And here we are indeed supreme ;
 Vanquish’d and dead the Asoors grim
 Our might and fame no more deride,
 And love and nectar still are sweet :
 But, I have mark’d, with anguish rent,
 That from the earth and sea,
 Nor vows are offer’d us, nor prayer.
 It was not thus in days of yore ;

² Reti, the wife of the god of love, and cup-bearer of heaven.

³ The nectar of the gods.

The very breezes sigh'd our name,
The woods our praises murmuring bore,
And ocean-waves with loud acclaim
All roll'd responsive to our fame ;
And temples of stone or humbler clay,
 Now mould'ring in decay,
Acknowledged Meru's haughty powers.
We live as then, as proud we be,
Still relish we the taste of blood ;
How then dares man, with off'rings meet,
And breathing incense, and fair flowers,
Neglect our favours to repay ?
Devise we now, with one consent,
To probe the reason, and resent :”
 Thus spoke the offended god.

xxv.

Attention held the synod mute ;
Till fiery Siva, proudest he
Of all the gods of proud repute,
In burning language thus replied :
“ Does Bruhmá to the gods complain
Of slighted worship in the vales below,
Neglected altars, rites denied ?
He hath his tempests, bolts of fire ;
Why sleeps the thunder in his hand ?
Plagues, pests, and cares, diseases diry,
Await the ethereal sire's command ;
Let him taste vengeance : sweeter far
Is vengeance than the taste of blood.
But why should he enkindle all ?
For me in Káshi's sacred fane,
 In Kámroop's shady wood,

On well-heap'd altars offerings glow,
 Alike by night and day ;
 Though hither met at Bruhmá's call,
 I wage no war with guiltless men ;
 Guiltless to me are they,
 As guiltless men to gods might be."

XXVI.

"And me, in Gokool's spicy shade"—
 Thus Vishnu spoke, in smiles array'd—
 "The village girls, in friendly bands,
 Propitiate still with vows and prayer ;
 And Pooree's temple yet commands
 The realms of ocean and of air,
 Based on the foaming shore,
 Where waves their malice vent in vain ;
 For there, above the billows roar,
 Ye still may hear the peaceful bell,
 And the shrill wreathéd strain
 Of the deep and sounding shell ⁴
 Murári loves so well."

XXVII.

Then out spoke Káli,⁵ goddess dread,
 Of sable charms and colour vain,
 Whose garland human skulls entwine ;
 Her rounded bosom, firm and bare,
 No robe concealéd but her hair,⁶

⁴ *Shankh, chakra, gadd, padma*—or, a shell, a discus, a club, and a lotus—are the armorial bearings of Vishnu.

⁵ Here Káli and Umá are alluded to as two distinct personages, but according to the Puráns they are only different representations of one and the same deity.

⁶ Káli is always represented naked, and of a black colour,

In curling tresses flowing down;
Dusky like night she seem'd,
But, ah! with youthful beauty warm,
Her eyes with sparry lustre gleam'd,
And love lurk'd in her dusky form:
" With daily offerings at my shrine
My votaries their homage pay;
And temples reeking red
With blood of myriad victims slain,
Proclaim my sway."

XXVIII.

Imperial Lakshmi next,
Of winning air and lotus grace,
Who fired three deities with her radiant charms,⁷
When rescued from her ocean-caves,
Till Hari⁸ snatch'd her to his arms—
The nereid of the waves!—
Open'd her rosy lips, and said:
" According to each sacred text
My power on earth is yet obey'd;
With pious incense pure,
And rites divine, the human race
My name adore."

XXIX.

And Umá, mountain-nymph, whom erst
In Gauri's groves the Rishis saw

⁷ There was a regular struggle for the possession of Lakshmi when she was churned out of the ocean, the candidates for her hand being Bruhmá, Vishnu, and Siva. She preferred Vishnu, who married her.

⁸ Vishnu.

In all her naked loveliness,⁹
 Smooth-footed¹ Umá blushing spoke :
 “ With offerings meek and pious care,
 And soul-onpleasing awe,
 On earth my name they yet revere ;
 Brúhmá may grudge his rites unpaid—
 I speak it not in pride—
 Of heavenly powers the first,
 North, south, east, west, in every place,
 Through realms of air, o'er oceans wide,
 Where'er I turn my look,
 I see myself obey'd.”

XXX.

Half-smiling, yet with looks severe,
 Then answer'd Brúhmá, sov'reign of the skies :
 “ Ye speak too proudly, hear !
 Kamalá,² Káli, Umá wise,
 Sisters in beauty, I envy not your fame,
 Immortal glory is the meed of charms,
 Enjoy immortal name ;
 Though men should cease to worship ye,
 Ye still will find adorers hero :
 Nor Vishnu's praise, nor Rudra³ thine,
 Covets the Lord of heaven and earth,
 If ye on earth be praiséd still.

⁹ The Rishis surprised Siva and his wife in a grove which, from that time, went by the name of Gauri.

¹ Called “smooth-footed” because, according to one of the Puráns, Brúhmá was so fascinated by the sight of her pretty feet, as to become quite unable to control himself.

² A name of Lakshmi.

³ A name of Siva.

Heed me, ye gods, these words of mine,
I speak them not from false alarms,
Of danger true I caution ye;
Your dues and mine are near forgot,
Our favours men remember not,
At other shrines they kneel—
Perchance to gods of foreign birth,
Some alien enemy.”

XXXI.

“ Malice, 'tis malice ! ” Siva ⁴ cried ;
“ Deep graven in thy heart remain
That curse which all thy shrines o'erturn'd,
When thou, with lusty fire,
To couch with Sandhya burn'd,⁵
Sandhya, thy own, thy blooming child !
While Ladjá,⁶ bashful maid,
Ran to the fearful virgin's aid,
And Rishis shriek'd with horror wild.
Droohinu,⁷ in thy heart of pride,
Why yet that curse dost thou retain ?
Our worship wherefore enviest thou ?
By Palte’s Ring,⁸ where hills aspire
The ambient clouds above to ride,
Art thou not worshipp'd now ? ”

⁴ Siva is always represented as a very quarrelsome deity.

⁵ Bruhmá made love to his own daughter, and, according to some authorities, lived with her for a hundred years.

⁶ Shâme—poetically represented in the Purâns as a virgin.

⁷ One of the thousand names of Bruhmá.

⁸ Bruhmá is said to be still worshipped by some nations beyond the Himálayá mountains.

XXXII.

Ill could his words great Bruhmá brook,
 Prajápati,⁹ lord of gods and kings,
 Whom gods like slaves obey'd ;
 The cendent bolts within his hands,
 To free themselves a struggle made,
 And yet his eager wrath he stay'd
 As thus reproving proud he spoke :
 “ Cease, wrangler, cease, thou torch of heaven,
 E'er quarrelling with thy king's commands,
 To foul dissension wholly given,
 And with whose brawls Sumeru rings.
 A god more lewd ¹ and vicious sure
 Than thee the heavens do not contain,
 And I thy scoffs may not endure ;
 For mine is creation vast, and mine
 To rule alone supreme on high,
 Nor, e'en though all the gods combine,
 Wrangler, shalt thou my power defy.”

XXXIII.

Then Siva fiercely thus replied :
 “ Reign I .. . ~~wilt~~, on others reign,
 If all the assembled Deos here
 As slaves thy 'hests obey,
 Thy thunders fear ;
 But think not, Bruhmá, me to sway ;
 Not I, nor mine,
 To that ignoble herd belong ;
 Inferior nor to thee, nor none, as strong,

⁹ Lord of Creatures.

¹ He is represented as such in several of the Puráns.

Equal in glory, equal in command,
I rule alone,
Firm on Kailásá's mountain throne :
Before again thou darest to chide,
Resolve if thou wouldest light the brand—
The bloody brand of war."

XXXIV.

And now all heaven in discord dire
Had straight involvéd been ;
For Bruhmá met with wilder look
Bhootesu's² glance of living fire,
And the heavenly mountain shook,
Though vast and founded deep,
Appalléd at the stormy scene !
When up Ganesa rose to view,
The child of Umá's secret loves,³
Whose words were like the honey dew
The soft Bhramaras⁴ daily sip,
Or store within their waxy cells,
In Chaitra-rátha's balmy groves,⁵
And fragrant, bosky dells.

XXXV.

" Ye gods, in mercy from dissension cease,
Mightiest of all, close not in strife,
For wisdom⁶ now adviseth peace.

² One of the thousand names of Siva.

³ Ganesa is the child of Umá without a father, as Mars of Juno. His mother is said to have formed him by collecting the scum that floated in her washing-tub.

⁴ Bees.

⁵ The groves of Chaitra-rátha fringe the borders of Sumeru.

⁶ Ganesa is the god of wisdom.

Bruhmá, thy words with truth if rife—
 And I thy truth nor question nor deny—
 This is no time for us to fight ;
 When alien gods earth's homage claim,
 Friendship in heaven should be well knit.
 Then chafe not thou, with haughty pride,
 Gircesha's⁷ heart of flame :
 Nor thou, dread father, trident-arm'd,
 Give hours to wrath to council due,
 Nor scorn Droohinu's truth ;
 But calmly weigh the facts reveal'd.
 Call Mitra forth⁸ and Indu⁹ too,
 And Kasyapa's gay daughters¹ robed in youth,
 Who twinkling watch the sky ;
 From them naught e'er can be conceal'd ;
 Let them speak out, of fear disarm'd,
 Of what beneath the light of day,
 Or 'neath Himánsu's silver ray,²
 They have on earth descried.”

XXXVI.

The list'ning gods the words approved ;
 And straight Divácar,³ prince of day,
 In form a lovely youth there stood,
 In molten gold array'd :
 “ Yes, I have seen,” he softly said,
 “ Traversing on my rapid car
 Through ether's wide, cerulean way,
 Climes where our names are unbeloved,

⁷ A name of Siva.⁸ The sun.⁹ The moon.¹ The stars.² The moonlight.³ The sun, or rather, he who makes the day.

Our favours uncareass'd ;
 And e'en in Bhárat's plains and woods,⁴
 Methinks I often hear from far
 Strange prayers to stranger gods address'd.”

XXXVII.

Next Chandra⁵ spoke, a female now,
 Unsex'd by Siva's deadly ire,
 For much officious speed,
 When he with labour had resolved,
 And many a wily art,
 The scruples of Rohini's shame,
 And clasp'd her guilty to his heart :
 “ Surveying every spot and spire,
 Attesting every secret deed,
 While climbing up the empyrean brow
 In midnight gloom involved,
 I oft have seen, the sights not rare,
 Though some yet laud our praise and name,
 That alien gods the worship share.”

XXXVIII.

The sister stars, a beauteous band,
 With blushes in their speaking eyes,
 In accents soft as dew confess
 How, mid the stillness of the night,
 They oft had seen the temples stand
 Unlighted, and with altars cold ;

⁴ India is called *Bháratbarsha*, or the land of Bhárat, after a king of that name.

⁵ The moon, originally a male deity, but turned into a female for surprising his own wife Rohini in the arms of Siva.

Sudersan's praise, Mahesa's rite,⁶
 Unpaid, unsung they could attest ;
 And they had heard dread blasphemies
 By human lips oft told,
 Such as ne'er the Asoors bold
 Had hurl'd against the skies.

XXXIX.

Then thus the ruler Bruhmá spake :
 " Gods, ye have heard the sun divine,
 Who shines upon the immortal powers,
 The moon and stars, who nightly mount
 Heaven's concave high to look adown ;
 Say, will we still men's slights disown ?
 Or, well convinced, will ye combine,
 Your counsels sage to me alending,
 To bring impiety to account ?
 Let each his own choice take,
 To stand by me, our rights befriending,
 Or court dull ease within his bowers."

XL.

Scarce had he ceased when Siva rose ;
 And alter'd was his tone and look,
 As thus repentant now he spoke :
 " Glory of gods, and worthiest far,
 Thy truth, dim erst, now stands confess,
 Bruhmá ! nor I dark doubts retain.
 Forgive the words I harshly said,
 That did a raging mind disclose,
 And, ah ! so ill-applied to thee ;

* Vishnu and Siva.

And let us instant haste to war,
 To avenge our slighted might,
 Slighted by men profane.
 I with my *trisula* bright,
 Thou with thy bolts of fire,
 And Vishnu, armed with *chakra*⁷ dread,
 And Umá with her war-brand dire,
 In concert acting, by thee led,
 Will soon and amply be repaid ;
 And, ere the sun slopes to the west,
 A ruin'd heap the earth shall be.”

XLI.

But Vishnu check'd his comrade's haste,
 And Bruhmá did his words approve :
 “ Let all the immortals rest,” he said,
 “ Safe in Sumeru's golden bowers,
 Where space enough there is for all ;
 While Márut, herald of our will,
 Explores the earth on pinions brave,
 That we may learn what adverse powers
 Dispute with us man's pious love.
 Deem not that I their might do dread,
 For I Kytábhú laid in dust,
 And Mádhú fierce and tall,⁸
 When, with ambitious aim,
 To wage their impious wars, they came
 E'en to our hallow'd homes above.
 Janárdhan named, the good I save,
 And, fearing none,
 The wicked I distress them still :

⁷ The discus, one of the weapons of Vishnu.

⁸ Asoors, both.

But sure, 'tis wiser far
 With open eyes our foes to see,
 What powers, what numbers, or how strong they be,
 Ere we rush headlong to the war,
 Involving heaven's high throne."

XLII.

" Well said," was Bruhmá's brief reply,
 And all the gods with loud acclaim
 The counsel did approve ;
 And straight, obedient to their call,
 Pavana stood before them all,
 To plough the breeze or cleave the sky,
 For he was e'er athirst of fame,
 And fond afar to rove.

XLIII.

" Speed to the earth on tempest wings,"
 Said Bruhmá to his herald bold ;
 " And, as you pass each valley fair,
 Or mount sublime with forests crown'd,
 Or streamlet pure and cold,
 Fed from its everlasting springs,
 Observe the habits, ways of men,
 Their pleasures and their pride,
 And, most of all, inquire,
 By subtle means, with art profound,
 What Deos they revere,
 Where dwelling, what their power, since when
 And whence their sway :
 Behold Sumeru's portals wide,
 Speed on thine errand—haste away."

XLIV.

As shoots the lightning in its flight,
From cloud to cloud, the welkin through,
As parts the arrow from the bow,
Upon its deathful task awending,
So quick, from Sumeru's giddy height,
Down on his darkling way descending,
Did Márut on the earth alight.

XLV.

Meanwhile, the council labours done,
With festive cheer Sumeru rung,
While pass'd around the nectar gay
From deep *Sumudra*'s bosom won ;⁹
The matchless Lakshmi led the dance,
And Saraswati tuned the lyre,
Waking upon its golden wire
Sweet notes, the troubled heart to trance ;
And Umá, and her min'strant fair
 The youthful Reti sung,
 While Cáma,¹ playful child,
On all sides sped, in frolic wild,
 His shafts with flow'rets strung.
 Piercing through stone and steel,
And melting in the bowers above,
 The immortal hearts to love !
To ears profane how shall my lay
 Their loves reveal ?

⁹ The *amrita* was won at the churning of the ocean.

¹ The god of love.

CANTO SECOND.

I.

'TWAS night, and Surjya lull'd asleep
On fawn-eyed Soma's breast repos'd ;²
And birds, and beasts, and mortal men,
With weary eyelids closed
In silent slumber, calm and deep,
Found rest awhile from toil and pain.

II.

'Twas night, when down the moonless sky,
Borne on his azure pinions bold,
Pavana did on earth alight :
'Twas dark, but to his heavenly eye
That darkness naught conceal'd ;
He darted through the gloomy night
Where Himálay of summit cold
Its loftiest heights reveal'd.

III.

Nor rested, till he found the peak
Where Párvati, the mountain-maid,
With many a charm from mystic lore,
In pious voice, with manners meek,
Did Siva's glorious name adore,³
Ere he with love her love repaid,
And, on its viewless crest,
The prostrate virgin prest !

² According to a text of the Veds, Surjya, or the sun, is the wife of Soma, the moon. "Prajápati gave his daughter Surjya Sávitri to Soma, the king."

³ Párvati, or Umá, gained her husband by much worship and austerity.

IV.

He lighted where by Kedár steep⁴
Gaurikoond spreads her mourning waters,
The silent pool where Gauri laved,
Ere she to Sancara⁵ with rare flowers
 Her pious tribute paid.

No longer now the mountain daughters
Sought its bosom cold and deep,
The lake no more in ripples waved ;
By frost impearl'd, its harden'd bed
For Umá grieved, and happier hours.

V.

From many a secret fountain rushing
Mandákini here the earth attain'd,⁶
 To lose her holier name !
Her curling eddies, foaming, gushing,
Now in playful gambols flashing,
And now o'er hard rocks proudly dashing,
 The eternal hills did rend ;
And prickly bush, and brambles gay
In vain essay'd her pride to tame,
 Or check her truant play.

VI.

Pavana stood awhile to see
The giant hills, the infant stream ;

⁴ Kedárñáth, one of the peaks of the Himálayá mountains.

⁵ Siva.

⁶ The author has called this one of the sources of the Ganges, and so it is, though Gángotri is generally held to be the chief source of the sacred river.

O, 'twas a glorious scene !
 A child rock'd in its nurses' arms,
 Playing with puny glee,
 Or fretted now with wild alarms,
 That foamy rill did seem ;
 But savage were the nurses seen,
 The child, 'twas wond'rous fair !
 Pavana gazed upon its charms,
 For much to gaze upon was there ;
 The silent sky was cool and calm,
 Lethéan was its fresh'ning balm.

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VII.

So grand the scene the god of wind
 Might well his errand have forgot ;
 But from the heavenly mind
 The call of duty escapeth not.
 A little bower his looks did greet,
 From which crept out a feeble ray,
 A twinkling light, much like a star ;
 A hermit there, by night and day,
 From haunts of men afar,
 The names of Siva did repeat,
 Eternal rest to win.

VIII.

He bends him to the lonely grot ;
 He feigns a woman's form ;
 A woman old, staff-propp'd he seem'd,
 Her front deep-furrow'd, sunk her eyes,
 And hair all silver'd o'er ;
 Thus wends he to the lonely spot,

Feeble and slow, as crawls a worm,
Yet sure of tread, o'er crags he hies,
Till he attains the lowly door
From which the feeble rush-light gleam'd.

IX.

He knocks. "Come in," in silver tone
He hears the gentle hermit speak ;
"What would my sister in this waste ?
Infirm and old, what dost thou seek ?
What art thou ? whence ? and why alone ?
By what distress now hither cast ?
Reveal. E'en men hero seldom roam,
And hither women never come."

X.

"Ah ! how can I to thee unfold
What I was once when in my glory ?
Young was I in the days of yore,
Of noble blood, and beauty rare,
And many were the youths who woo'd me ;
But one I loved above them all,
Who never from my side did fail,
Till, by his smiles and speeches fair,
My maiden heart it was beguiled.
Ah, little did my love avail !
Alas ! it is a common story ;
I trusted him and was defiled :
And then he left me all in tears,
With laden womb and in despair.
My womb a growing burden felt,
I felt a chillness in my heart ;

Till yet a greater, heavier guilt,
 Made child and mother part.
 And ever since the rock and moor,
 And forest depths have been my home ;
 The troubled soul, for ever grieving,
 Nor recks the rain, nor dreads to roam
 Where wintry winds prevail.
 To wipe away that only sin—
 How hard, alas ! is heaven to win—
 I visit shrines both great and small,
 To bend my frozen knee.

xi.

“ From Ánkhee’s hallow’d pile returning,
 Where Gungá hath another spring,
 I saw Budrináth’s fountains pure ;
 And thence, the fear of death still scorning,
 Bent on my backward way,
 To see Gaurikoond’s icy plain
 My footsteps here I bring ;
 And, onward hence, I mean to view
 Gángotri’s sacred fane ;
 And then, by Hurdwár’s cheerless door,
 Return to Bhárat’s vales below.
 But tell me, brother, why so few
 Now hither come their vows to pay ?
 Is earth then sinless grown ?
 For I have wander’d all the way,
 Pursued my pilgrimage alone,
 And hence I must as lonely go :
 The mighty cause, if known, explain,
 Why men despise, how gods have fallen low.”

XII.

“ It grieves me, sister, thou shouldst ask
 By me the cause to be resolved,
 Why men have impious grown ;
 By night and day that cause have I,
 In waking and in dreams, revolved,
 Till I could only guess but one :
 Tho' *Mlech'has*, who with friendly mask
 Our wealth and substance all consume,
 And profit by our loss,
 Our sacred gods defy, and call
 Upon their hearers blunt to join
 With lying words their dread impiety.
 They worship, fools, a wooden cross ;
 And other fools, by folly led,
 Or drawn by foul insidious arts,
 In all the blindness of their hearts,
 Their barbarous rites are choosing,
 Renouncing e'en their fathers' creed,
 So grand, so beautiful !
 But soon those gods they dare disown—
 Sister, they never sleep—
 Will rise with might combined,
 Their wrath unloosing ;
 I know great Siva's fiery mind :
 In secret yet my thoughts I keep,
 The wrongs are great, the hour is nigh,
 And dreadful will the vengeance be—
 Th' apostate's well-earn'd doom.

XIII.

“ Thou goest by Hurdwár's sacred shrine,
 To India's tarnish'd plain,

Go, watch the daily sacrilege
 That holy sites profane.
 Hither they come not, hypocrites frail,
 None climbs Himávan's dismal ridge :
 For truth inures the mind alone
 To hardships such as thou hast pass'd :
 But in each southern, sunny vale
 Traitors about the temples run,
 Who gods betray and men deceive.
 Despite their vaunt, and brag, and boast,
 There Bráhmans, in their ublest hands,
 From Káffirs unblest gifts receive ;
 And beggars, dress'd in pilgrim bands,
 Like Dundi strict, or Sunyási,⁷
 Indulge in lust and wine.
 But thou art weary ; sister, sleep ;
 Thou needest rest to strengthen thee :
 While I my nightly vigils keep.”

xiv.

“ Ah ! sleep and I are strangers grown,
 I cannot slumber now ;
 To witness deeds of graceless men,
 To witness all that thou hast seen,
 I leave Himálayá's brow ;
 The stars in heaven are shining bright,
 Nor reck I yet for gloomy night,
 Nor dread I yet to stray alone :
 Brother, adieu, I may not stay,
 Though long and dreary be the way.”
 This said, he took an eagle's form,

Religious mendicants.

And swift on pinions broad and strong,
In act to mingle with the storm,
He left the genial cell, and flew
 Far upwards borne along,
Screen'd from the hermit's longing view.

xv.

The hoary hermit wond'ring gazed ;
“A god ! a god !” he cried amazed,
 “Great Siva, it was thou !”
To him the god unknown,
Unknown alike for what he came,
He only murmur'd Siva's name ;
“Great Siva, wherefore me deceive ?
What mighty purpose brought thee down,
 How shall I dare conceive !
But since thou hast thus honour'd me,
Excuse my failings, deity !”

xvi.

And now Rajani⁸ rosy-palm'd,
Seated upon her golden throne,
Peep'd from her orient chambers fair,
Above the mists of dawning gray ;
And Arun, starting from her saffron gate,
Onward guided great Surjya's car
 In awful grandeur veil'd !
From his aerial height he then look'd down,
Pavana, and afar he kenn'd,

⁸ Here Surjya is understood as a male deity, after the Purâns, and having two wives—Rajani, of celestial birth, and Nichsubhâ of human parentage.

Where Hurdwár frown'd in solemn state,
 Gungá on India's plains descend,
 By naked eremites hail'd !
 The sun glanced fair upon the stream,
 And where its current, fury calm'd,
 Winded in limpid course its way,
 Through tangling thorn and copse-wood grim
 Proud fanes he could desery,
 Lifting their sacred summits high
 Beneath the light of day.

XVII.

On outspread pinions, poised on high,
 With downward look Pavana hung,
 Unnoticed by the clamorous throng ;
 Birds numerous flutter'd in the sky,
 And of the many he seem'd one—
 A witness of the doings done.

XVIII.

He hover'd nearer, till right o'er
 The assembled multitudo he camo
 And floated ; and he did hear
 Full many a spell of potent power
 For wicked sprites and fays to fear,
 And praises of the river sung,
 And gods all mention'd each by name :
 But mad and boisterous was the lay
 That did their praises thus prolong ;
 And ye might hear Pavana mourn—
 “ Such worship do not covet they,
 Better no worship than such scorn.”

XIX.

Then forward towards the southern sky,
In grief and pain he turn'd his eye,
 In act to leave the spot ;
When lo ! far from the raving throng,
The wild retir'd rocks among,
 A human form he 'spied ;
Bent on his knees that man there sought
 Communion with his God.
Ah ! piety lives, Pavana cried,
Then flew towards the rugged sod,
And heard the prayer of the pious man,
As thus its measured numbers ran :—

PRAYER.

1.

“The sunny skies are often clouded,
And sorrow lours where gladness reign'd ;
But naught disturbs the peace of mind
That trust in Thee, O Lord ! hath gain'd.

2.

“Good and evil always blended,
Pleasures marr'd by grief and care,
Show how all on earth is empty :
Heaven excepted, what is fair ?

3.

“The jewell'd bosom often hideth
A thousand fountains of unrest ;
The beggar, Jesus, loved by Thee,
Is sure than crown'd princes blest.

4.

“ Wisdom, station, youth, and beauty,
They sting alike, then pass to dust ;
What never stings and never passeth
Is in Thee the good man’s trust.

5.

“ Fortune’s tide now ebbing, flowing,
Changes, alas ! in every hour ;
Naught is steadfast save, Jesus, Thou,
It knows no change Thy mercy’s power.

6.

“ Then why should fortune ever vex me ?
Or why the world should me allure ?
From pain and tears no wealth can save me,
But Thou canst every evil cure.

7.

“ At Siva’s shrine for power they bow,
For wealth at Vishnu’s offerings lay ;
But I nor wealth nor power demand,
Great Jesus ! be my prop and stay.”

xx.

The prayer was fervent, pious, meek,
 But who could Jesus be ?
That name Pavana ne’er had heard ;
Vishnu and Siva both disclaim’d,
And Jesus alone by him thus named,
 Whom did the sinner seek ?

A thousand names hath Váni's^º lord,
 Bruhmá! perhaps 'twas he!
 Thus Márut reason'd, then exulting flew
 Jumuná's current dark to view.

XXI.

Lightly his pinions beat the air,
 Yet rapid as a dream
 Through the vast distance him they bear ;
 And now above Mathoorá's town,
 Pass'd Brindá's scented grove,^¹
 He slowly steers, and oft looks down
 Upon the sod that Krishna^² bore,—
 Krishna, the joyous theme
 Of many a tale and lay of love,
 Whom milk-maids yet adore.

XXII.

The winds from Gokool's spicy plain,
 How odour fraught they come !
 Thy heart dilates ; rest, Pavan, rest,
 Thy daring zeal restrain ;
 See weary Surjya to the west
 Hast'ning to fair Nichsubhá's^³ home,
 Rest, Márut, rest !

XXIII.

Where, on the river's sedgy side,
 The antelope free unharness'd stray'd

^º Váni, a name of Saraswati.^¹ Brindábun.^² One of the incarnations of Vishnu, who had sixteen thousand concubines, all *gopis*, or milk-women.^³ The terrestrial wife of Surjya, and daughter of Viswakarmá.

And cropp'd the lotus wild,
 Beside a fane decay'd
 By sacred billows laved,
 Pavana lighted ; and now, ding, dong !
 The bells sonorous rung,
 While stood in order ranged, and mild,
 With hands upraised, a numerous throng ;
 But as the pæan rose they raved,
 And pray'd aloud with Stentor's tongue :
 And now, with bosoms open wide,
 Or robed in linen soft and thin
 That scarce conceal'd the limbs within,
 The Deva-dáshis⁴ danced,
 Burning with love unchaste and wild desire ;
 And, as they murmur'd Krishna's name,
 And sung of Rádhá's⁵ hallow'd flame,
 Full many a wanton look they glanced,
 Darting from lusty eyes contagious fire
 Return'd by votaries seeming pure !

XXIV.

As if in contrast to the scene,
 Kneeling upon the margin green
 Of the clear and limpid flood,
 Beneath the broad banáná's shade
 Márut a lonely youth descried,
 Who, heedless of the throng,
 A prayer devout devoutly pray'd
 Unto some nameless god,
 And thus in exultation sung :—

⁴ Women devoted to the service of temples.

⁵ The principal mistress of Krishna,

PRAYER.

1.

“ Salvation, O Salvation !
 Health of the sinner’s soul !
Life of the sorrow laden !
 Lead me to your goal ;
By my loved Redeemer’s gore,
By the impious taunts He bore,
Take me to your haven shore.

2.

“ Salvation, O Salvation !
 Bring me your healing tide ;
I am the helpless, hopeless one,
 For whom my Saviour died :
His sinless blood is trickling free,
I see His death’s last agony,
With gory hands He beckons me.

3.

“ His writhing nerves, His bitter tears
 When the great deed was done,
When He, the holiest, died to save,
 For me Redemption won :
Then was the noon-day sun enshrouded,
The earth with fearful darkness clouded,
While impious rabble trembling crowded.

4.

“ The temple’s veil was rent in twain,
 And, in the hour of gloom,

A VISION OF SUMERU.

The sheeted dead arose and walk'd
 Out of the silent tomb :
 Thus did my Saviour die for me,
 His erring sheep redeeméd He,
 Then welcome be His cross to me !

5.

“ Death, thine empire's at an end ;
 King of terrors ! what art thou ?
 He beckons to eternal life,
 Blest are they who follow now :
 Come, rich and poor, to Zion's gate,
 Pass, while it is open yet,
 Rejoice, my soul, thou art not late.”

xxv.

“ The cross, the cross, of which he spake,
 That pious hermit old,
 The cross this lowly man adores,”
 With self thus communed Márut bold.
 “ A wooden cross his god if be
 He worshippeth most piously ;
 Could I his sleeping heart awake
 To nobler truths than it hath found,
 Jumuná's shores
 With holier anthems would rebound.”

xxvi.

But he was gone ; that pious youth
 Pavana saw no more ;
 Leaving the river's reedy side,
 A lone and rugged path he took,

And reach'd the home where he did 'bide
Unseen, unknown :
Pavana's heart was grieved full sore,
“ Why tarry yet since he is gone ? ”

xxvii.

Shrill sang the rising northern gale,
When on his pinions bold again
Pavana left the scented vale—
 Mathoorá's hallow'd ground !
And bent him, through the welkin wide,
Towards blest Prayága's distant plain,⁶
Where Jumná pours her gentle tide
On Gungá's bosom fiercely heaving :
There too Sar'swati, the poet sings,
Through under-ground her passage cleaving,
Still to her beauteous sister bound,
Her silver-edded tributes brings,
To roll together to the sea,
 In boist'rous harmony.

xxviii.

Wrapp'd in the clouds of sable night,
Borne swiftly onwards Márut flew,
Till he the blessed valley gain'd
 Before the dawn of light ;
Broad and majestic here the stream
That he a purling rill did view
Mid Himálayá's steeps of snow ;
And laughing as an infant's dream,
Her Jumná met, with force restrain'd,
 In calm, pellucid flow.

⁶ Álláhábád.

xxix.

See, pilgrims on the margin stand,
 Awaiting there the break of day,
 To plunge them in the torrent pure :
 List, to the strains of the clam'rous band
 Far o'er the distance dying away,
 Of zealots the impassion'd verse ;
 List, to the mystic roar
 That, like the music of the sea,
 Or the new-born thunder's lullaby,
 The praises of the gods rehearse.

xxx.

Pavana listen'd, while the morn,
 Ascending o'er the eastern sky,
 forbade the stars with useless light
 To tarry on the wake of night,
 And strew'd with dimpling gold the stream.
 The night dispersed, the people plunged
 Into the groaning flood,
 And shouts tremendous rose on high ;
 The blessed powers on Meru's brow
 Might well have heard the deaf'ning scream,
 As on their thrones they lounged ;
 So loud each votary hail'd his god.

xxxi.

That frantic shout, to Márut's ear
 Beareth, alas ! no heart-felt prayer,
 No vocal song of love,
 Or innocence and purity.
 "How strange," thinks he, "in such an hour,

So calm, so peaceful, and so clear,
When every leaf and every flower
Their grateful praise to gods above,
With silent fervour, seem to pay,
Man, man alone cannot refrain

From impious mockery !

If earth hath not a holier spot
Than blest Prayága's vaunted shrine,
The gods in sooth are worshipp'd not ;
For, ah ! this worship's not divine.
Still bear me on my pinions free,
A purer site I fain would see."

xxxii.

And straight, upon unwearying wings,
He sought the welkin height once more,

And towards the east he flew—

Tracking the Gungá's hallow'd way ;
Nor stopp'd his flight, till he did view
On Káshi's fane the noon-tide ray

In gentle slumber hush'd,
While underneath the river lay,
Its billows now nor chafed nor flush'd,
But gliding with soft murmurings,
And breaking mildly on the shore :
Ah, this full sure the home must be,
Pavana thought, of piety !

xxxiii.

A human form the god belies ;
Like pious sage, in tatters clad,

And muttering magic *mantrus*⁷ dire,
 He to Visheswar's⁸ temple hies.
 Go, mark the mystic emblem there,
 With odoriferous flowers encrown'd ;
 Go, mark the adorers mad,
 That in their wordy hymns ne'er tire,
 While yet, within the hallow'd ground,
 Full many a deed of shame they share :
 'Neath pious 'portment meek and still
 A contrite heart, a spirit pure,
 Gaze Pavana, seek thy fill,
 But here thou wilt not find them sure.

XXXIV.

What though each *sloka*⁹ and each prayer
 Be wreathed in Sanskrit verse refined,
 Of truth breathes not the labouring mind
 That pours the pious strain ;
 For, ah ! low thoughts are rankling there,
 All naked to Pavana's ken,
 The homage of the crowd their aim,
 Who loudest shout Iswara's¹ name. .

XXXV.

Then Márut left the temple's shade,
 Approaching to the river's shore,
 His eyes hung down in deep despair :
 " I may as well this search give o'er,"

⁷ Sacred texts and incantations.

⁸ Visheswara, one of the names of Siva.

⁹ Sentence.

¹ *Iswara* literally means "God." It is one of the names of Siva.

Thus inward to himself he said,
“ And back to Brúhmá’s court repair ;
Since faith in Káshi dwelleth not,
The gods on earth are sure forgot.”

XXXVI.

But list ! ah ! stay, one moment stay !
List to that noonday orison,
Yon Bráhman child is singing !
Heavenward, aloft, afar, away,
That prayer is speeding on,
Through flowery meadows ringing,
By envious winds in vain deterr’d :
Ah ! sweet, melodious child,
Whence hast thou learnt that anthem wild,
So piously preferr’d ?

THE CHILD’S PRAYER.

“ Father of all ! mysterious One !
Lord supreme ! invisible and alone !
Thou, whom the rapt, dilating soul,
In wildest dreams can never all behold !
Thou, in whose praise all language were too faint,
Whose glories burning words can never paint,
The rill, the river, and the boundless sea,
Of all that is, or was, or e’er shall be,
How with our hearts shall we Thy presence dare ?
Expressive silence be my prayer ! ”

XXXVII.

“ Well hast thou sung thy pious lay ;
But come, ah ! tell me, dark-hair’d boy,

Who may this godhead be,
 To whom in such impassion'd strain,
 Thou singest thy sweet melody?"
 Thus, to the Brâhman's child did Mârut say,
 And he thus answer'd straight amain
 With eager joy :—

XXXVIII.

" What God I worship wouldst thou know ?
 And what His blessed name may be ?
 Then list, from childhood's lips the truth shall flow,
 And what He spake I'll speak to thee.
 Who did chaotic gloom remove,
 Who bade the waters to divide,
 Who framed the solid earth,
 And clothed its bosom with His love,
 And gave the grass and verdure birth
 The flowing rill beside,
 And hung the trees with fruits and flowers,
 And man His crowning work who made,
 To grace fair Eden's breathing bowers,
 High woods, and haunted shade,
 That is my God ! Jehovah His name !
 'Tis writ in heaven in characters of flame.

XXXIX.

" His might, His goodness, wouldst thou know ?
 Ah, list to truths unknown before,
 Unknown e'en yet in yonder shrine.
 My God ne'er sleeps ; the sinner's stay,
 By sinner's side He lives alway ;

Though plunged thou be in deadliest sin,
He still will hear and holpen thee ;
Nor sendeth He to deserts wild
For penance and prayer His hapless child,
Nor bids him live on roots and tree ;
For pain He made not man to be,
But rather made him for delight :
Who yields him in the goodly fight,
In errors lost who goes astray,
He beckons back, He calls him nigh,
He teaches him to mourn and pray,
With the mourning of heart, not of eye ;
He bade the sinner, despiséd by men,
Despairing of mercy divine,—
‘ Pardon’d thou art—go, sinner, go,
 But sin thou never more ! ’
That is my God—Jehovah His name,
Jehovah and Jesus are one and the same.”

XL.

“ And who may Jehovah or Jesus be ?
Where was He born, and where His home ?
 Reveal this, my boy, unto me :
On high Sumeru sooth no dome
For Jesus stands, I know full well ;
Where lives thy God ? come, sweet one, tell.”

XLI.

“ Where lives He not ? ” the boy replied :
“ Mark Him upon yon tossing foam,
See, where He rides the noontide ray,
Mark Him upon the lotus fair

Floating adown the river's bed,
 Observe Him in the lucent air,
 Nay, seek Him in thy heart, for there
 He loveth most to make His home ;
 My God is everywhere !
 And never, never far away.

XLII.

"Thou ask'st when He was born, and where ?
 Ah, that I cannot tell !
 Eternity, when wert thou born ?
 Before time was, ere light so fair
 Did nature's empire thus adorn,
 With raven darkness He did dwell.
 Yet He was born ; ay, Jesus Thou,
 Thy human form a human womb
 Did once entomb,
 And Thou wert born a child !
 'Twas many, many years ago,
 The time was winter wild,
 Jehovah's Son a babe then lay ;
 While stars look'd down in mute amaze,
 Or wand'ring show'd towards Him the way
 To sages, who from distant lands
 Came forth, in friendly bands,
 Upon their Saviour's face to gaze.

XLIII.

"Yes, He was born a human child ,
 And suck'd He from a mother's breast,
 Of virgin mother undefiled !
 O love divine !

That, for the sinner's rest,
Could even to the earth descend,
Like lowly mortal stoop to be,
And with the world thy tissue twine,
Thou hast nor birth nor end !

XLIV.

“ Yes, He was born, and here He died
On far Golgotha's curséd tree,
Redemption on mankind conferring ;
The lily changed its snow-white hue,—
Sinner, He died for thee and me,
Then back again to heaven He hied :
Ah ! feel'st thou not an inward stirring
To pay to Him the homage due ? ”

XLV.

Thus spoke the heaven-taught child,
Then pass'd he on his way ;
While Márut, waking from amazement wild,
Swift as the birds that cleave the air,
Or, like the shooting star so bright,
So ardent in its earthward flight,
Towards Kámroop's woodlands did repair,
Riding upon the beams of day.

XLVI.

He pass'd where Goomti in her pride
Jáhnavi's classic bosom sought,
And where the Gográ, ever-chiding,
In anger chased her sandy shore ;

Nor tarried he where Hiranyabáhoo² brought
 Her tributes pure full proudly gliding,
 Nor stopp'd by Gunduck's rolling tide,
 Nor yet to hear the Kosí's roar,
 As on the sedgy bank it rings :
 Onward he pass'd ; but nothing brings
 A ray of comfort to his breast,
 By man's ingratitude deprest.

XLVII.

Pass'd Gour's sweet-scented groves and glades,
 Ere yet the parting sun withdrew,
 Pavana mark'd the sylvan shades
 Of Kámroop bursting on the view.
 A fragrant musk perfumed the dales,
 The orange flowers breathed in the gales ;
 Ah ! hallow'd spot, .
 Where Siva, ere the fleccy down
 Of manhood on his cheek was grown,
 From sullen strictness fleeing,
 The blushing Umá bróught³—
 Umá, the wonder of all eyes,
 The lovely child of Mená⁴ wise—
 And deep within its mystic grove,
 On couch of yielding asphodels,

² The Soane, the Eranoboas of the Greeks. The term *Hiranya-báhoo* literally means the “golden arm.”

³ Siva with his wife retired to Kámroop immediately after their marriage. He is here represented as having been married in his youth. The Puráns, on the contrary, say that he led an ascetic's life for a long time before he was wedded. The gods, however, may be represented as ever young.

⁴ Menakú was the mother of Párvati.

Hid e'en from sight all-seeing,
Enjoy'd the rites of nuptial love.

XLVIII.

From Kámroop's groves no prayer now rose,
Where spent with toil Pavana lit ;
Before his sight no altar glows,
His ears no songs of triumph greet,
Exalting Siva's dreaded name.
The gentle gales yet fann'd the flowers,
Stealing their odorous spoils away ;
And maiden love, in vernal bowers,
Whisper'd and pleaded for delay

As sweetly as of yore ;

In spicy groves disporting yet,
The joyous birds still coo'd and sung,
And with their notes the valleys rung
From dewy morn to evening late ;
But pious prayers were heard no more !
" Their ancient honours hence are flown,
The gods uncared for and unknown
Here live not in their fame ;
Then whither shall I now repair ? "
Thus murmur'd Márut in despair.

XLIX.

The daylight now from earth was gone,
And darkness spread her wings around,
And sober night came on.
The night was soft, the sky was calm,
And gently fell the dewy balm,
Yet cares possess'd Pavana's mind ;

In heaven's clear vault the bright stars shone,
 Birds to their nests had hied away,
 Light-hearted birds how happy they !
 And men lay wrapp'd in sleep profound ;
 But sleep could not his eyelids close :
 Sleep, supreme o'er gods and men,
 On troubled minds thy power is vain,
 Though music murmurs in the wind !
 Pavana slept not, for his soul
 With aching thoughts was troubled now ;
 What next to do, and how,
 Back to Bruhmá's court to lie,
 Or yet again abroad to fly,
 Wand'ring from pole to pole,
 He knew not ; when the thought arose
 Pooree's dark temple once to view,
 And then bid earth a last adieu.

L.

Straight starting from the charméd ground,
 Onward upon his wings he swept,
 O'er broad Bengalá's verdant plains,
 To where the foaming billows broke
 On far Orissá's classic strand,
 Laving its sacred fanes,
 In one perpetual, never-ending war ;
 And e'er Aruna mild awoke
 To ope, with gentle hands and pure,
 The curtains of the sleeping morn,
 The black pagodá from afar
 In ruins Márut saw and wept,
 And heard the dog with surly sound,
 Sole tenant of the hallow'd place,

Howl to the waves that chafed its base,
Invading but to wash the sand.
Nay, weep not, god, on yonder shore
There is a sight to pleasure thee,
Behold, beside yon bank wave-worn,
Poorce's proud temple lords the sea !

LI.

What languor o'er his spirit spreads
E'en while he hears the song of praise
That joyful numbers raise !
What numbness cold his limbs invades !
Why, swelling tears, ah ! wherefore flow ?
"The blushing morn, it blushes more
To hear that mad and frantic roar,
Of myriads the accordant cry ;
Ah, sounds of woe !
Ah, sights of foul obscenity !
For you have I thus toilsome sped ?"
To self Pavana mourning said.

LII.

He saw where women in their prime,
Bound from afar with holy vows,
With rage of lust were burning ;
In deeper guilt and deadlier crime,
The laws divine all scorning,
He saw the temple priests carouse,
Defiling all that region pure :
Amazed, disgusted, Pavan flew
From sights his eyes could not endure,
Till towards another house he drew —

LIII.

A fairy dome whose adamantine spire
 Seem'd almost piercing to the sky,
 And wide unbarr'd its frontal gate.
 Within Pavana enters straight
 That lofty vestibule dim,
 In vapours hid of viewless dye :
 Nor peals of laughter, nor huzza
 Ring through its walls and arches fair,
 Though many guests be there.
 Why are they met ? To worship Him
 Of whom so loudly trumpets fame ;
 Jehovah, Jesus, this His shrine ;
 But where's His form divine ?
 Or where His throne ?
 They pray'd, they sung ;
 Such prayer devout, such pious lay,
 Kindling with heavenly fire,
 On Pavan's ears had never rung ;
 And yet they worshipp'd but a name,
 A God unseen, a God unknown !

LIV.

“ Enough, enough, my weary task
 Is finish'd now, I know.
 Speed, pinions bold, O waft me back,
 Through the vast aerial track,
 Unto Sumeru's golden bowers,
 Where gales enamour'd blow
 Wooing celestial flowers ;
 For I would in the sunshine bask
 Of wreathy smiles, and looks of love,

Of Apsarás in realms above,
Whose cheeks in vernal beauty bloom,
Whose lips exhale a sweet perfume,
Whose locks, in braids all laughter-beaming,
O'er heaving bosoms gently streaming,
Awake full many a fond desire,
And light within a madd'ning fire."

Pavana spoke—then eager flew
Where deepen'd dark the azure blue.

CANTO THIRD.

I.

Fix'd on broad heaven his longing eye
Far from the earth Pavana fled,
Propp'd on his wings of rainbow hue;
And, ere bright noon had halved the day,
Through the soft air's transparent blue
He could from far descry
Sumeru's sacred head :
So fast he labour'd on his way.

II.

O ! for a genuine poet's fire,
That I might on this paper trace
Of that sweet scene the witchery ;
Or, but describe, in numbers rare,
Pavana's ecstasy !
Did Váni pure my dreams inspire ?

Váni, or Saraswati, is the Hindu goddess of poetry, in fact of all the learned accomplishments.

I would not sooth the task disgrace :
 But, ah ! like summer lightning fast
 Melts from my trance the vision vast,
 Instead of Meru's haunted brow

I gaze on empty air !
 Nor back Pavana lingers now.

III.

"Fling wide Sumeru's golden gate,"
 Said Bruhmá loud, "for lo ! behold,
 Through parting clouds he presses on,
 Pavana, of unconquer'd wings ;
 And bid the synod gather straight,
 Each god resume his throne,
 That all might hear by him unroll'd
 The heavy news he brings."

IV.

Within the odour-breathing hall
 Full swift are met the Deos all,
 And wide unbarr'd its gate of gold ;
 Each god, upon his seat reclining,
 In beauty or in armour shining,
 His dreams of love he told
 To willing ears of beauties gay,
 Ah, who so charming as were they !

V.

But in glides Pavan midst them all,
 Like vision from the phantom land,
 And hush'd within that star-paved hall
 Was every murmur gay ;

With breath withheld, and still as death,
Anxious sat the heavenly band,
 To hear bold Márut say
The tidings of his search for faith.

VI.

But weary Márut speaks not yet ;
Can heavenly power so weary be ?
Stern Siva frown'd ; impatiently
Grave Hari roll'd his eyes of fire ;
But, all collected and serene,
Unshaken still great Bruhmá sate,
 Placid and calm his mien,
As best befits the ethereal sire.

VII.

And now, with eyes fix'd on his lord,
Pavana loudly spoke,
And all the gods in silence heard :
“ From India's fragrant shores I come,
Where altars erst blazed all for ye,
 Deos and angels bright !
But there your glory's known no more.
Great Bruhmá, thou hast there no shrine—
 I've sought both far and near—
With holy rites none worships thee,
Though first in order and in might
On bleak Sumeru's snowy brow ;
 Nor Siva thou,
 Though temples hoar
Lofty and vast thine image bear,
Art worshipp'd yet with love divine ;

Nor Hari proud, thy song they wake,—
 Wilt thou believe the tale?—
 Save men deceitful, women frail.
 Káli, full many a lordly dome
 To thee is consecrate;
 And Umá fair, Sar'swati wise,
 And Lakshmi pure and true,
 On earth they worship you;
 But, ah! do not that worship prize.

VIII.

“ Shall I to you the scenes reveal
 That I have seen below?
 Then list, my words are plain and clear,
 Nor would I aught from you conceal.
 Men saw I oft like saints at prayer,
 But sots at heart them well I knew,
 'Neath saintly show their falsehood screening,
 Yielding their virtue at a blow
 So they could hide their guilt from view.
 Of innocence and honour void,
 E'en in the temples many sought
 On harlot-lap their strength to yield;
 And maidens to the shrines decoy'd,
 Returning to the sunlit field,
 Ne'er back again their virtue brought.
 Others I saw whose hearts were sown
 With love of earth, and that alone,
 All other loves out-weaning:
 In service of the temples there
 Youth and age bore many a pain,
 One object had they, it was gain;
 For this they toiled, their labours bore,

Their hearts'-blood shed for unblest gold,
But, ah ! not one, from motives pure,

 His pious prayer there told.

Their bodies some with fasts subdued,
The souls within were soil'd and dark,
To gain the homage of the crowd
 Their highest aim and mark.

A few there be—I saw but one—
Wasting their service far away,
Unheard, unheeded, and alone,
In sullen cave, on mountain gray.

IX.

“ And temples raised by mighty men
 I saw them overthrown,
Thick weeds and *burr*s their arches shading ;
And echoless the vaults that rung
 With pious praise and prayer,
Or answering to the wild-dog’s wail ;
For, ay, on many a hallow’d fane,
The cur hath made his unclean lair,
 The thrones of gods invading,
Since man in reverence did fail ;
 And there he dwelleth lone,
Your names untold—your fame unsung.

X.

“ Now, in the features of their faith,
 The visions of that elder time
When ye were honour’d, live no more :
The only worship yet sublime
That might the past recall from death

I met on hostile ground,
 In Church to Jesus sanctified.
 Ah, gods ! your doubting looks give o'er,
 I only speak the truth ;
 Of virgin-mother born, they sing,
 Was He who in His blameless youth
 Was pierced with thorns and crucified ;
 As symbol of Almighty Love
 This Son of Man is deified ;
 And songs that to His praise resound
 Comprise the only offering
 That ye might envy here above.

xi.

“ His praise throughout the land I’ve heard
 Sigh’d forth by young and old,
 From ruddy lips, from wither’d heart :
 Jehovah’s Son, His name they told ;
 I ne’er could know Jehovah who,
 Though well I learnt they meant not you.
 While yet upon the rush He lay,
 This mighty babe, by sages hail’d,
 Was Saviour named, and Lord ;
 And He upon the cross was nail’d
 For human sins ; so they assert,
 And so they worship Him ;
 His name the burden of each song.
 I’ve traced your downfall to its source,
 My mission had no other aim ;
 Now ye your counsels weigh ;
 I would revenge had I your force,
 For hate within me burneth strong.”

XII.

He ended frowning. Displeased were all
Who heard the tale, but silent yet ;
When up there rose Gireesha proud—
Storm on his tongue, and in his heart
The unborn earthquake struggling to be free—

In wrath he spoke aloud :

“ Why silent all ? Gods, ye have heard
Márun the bitter truth reveal ;
Will ye succumb to nameless powers ?
For war are ye afraid to start ?
Not so were ye, when to these bowers
The Daityas ⁶ dark in pride aspired,
And, with ambition fired,
Your fearful hands in arms did dare.
Or wait ye for great Brúhmá’s word ?

Brúhmá, unclose thy will ;
For, ah ! the danger is not small,
And we may marshal forth too late
If forth we venture not in speed.
At least, bid me to earth repair ;
Then shall the impious nations own,
Greater than Jesus and Jehovah too,
Rule in the empyrean empires blue,
For thick with dead their streams shall groan,
And red with blood shall be each shore ;
My sprites delight in human gore.”

XIII.

Thus vaunting spoke Kailásá’s lord :
His bold compeer, dread Vishnu, straight

⁶ Asoors.

Starting from his throne of gold,
And looking as when once of old,
In the Asoora's form belied,
 He Brinda found, and forced her love,⁷
 With fearless look and haughty word,
 Yet all collected, thus replied :
 “ Nay, brother, nay, not thou alone
 Of all the sacred powers above,
 Shall on this errand go ;
 For in my heart immortal hate
 As fierce as thine doth glow,
 And courage sure than me hath none,
 None e'er hath dangers master'd more,
 When, haughty of their little might,
 They dared omnipotence to the fight,
 Asooras, in the days of yore ;
 Of all I did 'twere long to tell,
 How many fled, how many fell,—
 Gods, ye remember well.”

XIV.

“ Go, ask the vanquish'd Asoor dread,
 Go, ask the minotaur⁸ slain,
 If dead he can to ye reply,
 When all the gods had striven in vain,
 And Indra fled to Bruhmá nigh,
 Who lopp'd his gorgon head.
 Is Umá fallen low,

⁷ As Jupiter deceived Alcmena by assuming the shape of her husband, even so Vishnu deceived Brinda, the wife of Jalandhar, a giant, by assuming his form, when it was foretold that Jalandhar could not be conquered so long as his wife remained chaste.

⁸ Mahishásoor, a demon, in form half buffalo, half Asoor.

Unprized above the ignoble crowd,
 Or has the sharp sword in her hand
To pruning-knife converted been,
Her lance become a willow wand,
That nor her councils, nor her arms
Are needed now midst war alarms ? ”

With ruffled brow
 Thus spoke Párvati proud.

XV.

Kumára,⁹ chief of fighting powers,
 The great Destroyer’s warrior-child,
 Begotten in no mother’s womb,
 Leant on his bow, and list’ning smiled
 At fair Párvati’s plaintive moan,
 And when she sat he rose and spake,
 In all the pride of youthhood’s bloom :
 “ Bruhmá, in battle and in fight
 Thou know’st than me none more hath wrought,
 For, when of yore, from heaven’s high bowers
 To hurl the gods Táriká¹ sought,
 ’Twas I that brought him down
 From his triumphant car,
 And he repaid with forfeit life
 Who did with dread Sumeru shake.
 My cause befriend, stand by the right,
 I claim the lead in war ;
 In others others lead, I lead in strife.”

XVI.

A wrathful glance dread Siva cast
 At his ungracious boy,

Kártika. He was born of Siva alone, as Ganesa was of Párvati.
 Lemon.

And Vishnu look'd with rage around,
 And Párvati with sneering slight,
 When breaking silence Brúhmá spoke :
 “ Your spirit, gods, I well approve.
 Eternal powers ! in dreadful deeds
 Ye all did win renown,
 When heaven's high thrones by Asoors dire
 With mad ambition were assail'd.
 Those days are past,
 Your might prevail'd,
 Their impious rage and vengeful ire
 Swift retribution found,
 And their huge corses fright no more.
 But now, forsooth, some higher power,
 That day and night on envy feeds,
 Doth guilefully advantago take
 Of our supine excess of joy.
 United thoughts and counsels now,
 And strength confederate should oppose
 His wile. Joint power alone
 May now prevail, not exploits brave
 Of single arms, though deluging with gore ;
 Gods, I will lead the fight,
 If you approve what I propose.”

xvii.

With wild uproar Sumeru rung,
 The gods approved with fierce acclaim,
 And plaudits rent the sky ;
 And then the bell, with iron tongue,
 The council o'er did loud proclaim,
 And each unto his bower straight went

With hopes and wishes beating high,
To arm him for the dread event.

XVIII.

And now Sar'swati, thy poet's mind
With genius waken and inspire,
That he, in thrilling strains of fire,
Responsive might proclaim
How moved with hate each heavenly breast,
As heavenly hands prepared for war,
And *chakra* or *trisula* dread,²
Or barb with poison'd head,
In grasps divine comprest.
Who first, who last, in that mad crowd,
Assembled round their potent lord,
With missiles arm'd and anger-brow'd,
Burning to be avenged on men,
Reveal ! And give me power, in stern accord,
To sing their wrath and proud disdain.

XIX.

First Siva, bravest of the train,
Proudly his mountain-bull bestrode,
Proud of his snaky diadem :
His eyeballs bursting with fierce ire,
He waved the trident's forkéd brand.
Fit emblem for his bloody hand !
With him there demons dark and dread,
Of horrid front, in numbers rode,
Nandi, with human gore all red,
And Vrangi of the ravenous mien,³

² Discus and trident.

³ Imps of Siva.

The rest too many here to name,
All breathing hatred dire.

xx.

And Hari, nearest to his bold compeer,
Arm'd with the discus and the rod,
And mounted on his nine-mouth'd steed,⁴
Shouted tremendous to his vassal powers,
Who dwelt in Vycant's fragrant bowers—
A multitude vast and dread !
And on his brow sat sour disdain,
His arms were to the shoulders bare,
And, so terrific blazed the god,
The sky it shrunk in fear,
And, as he skilful plied the rein,
He heaven and earth defied.

xxi.

Kártika there, on peacock riding,
Bent his strong horn with poison'd barb,
The leader he of heavenly bands,—
Though prior rank, e'en on the plain,
Vishnu and Siva often claim'd :
Grim and terrible in warlike garb
The graceful god was seen bestriding,
His passions dark with dignity tamed ;
How few there be to dare his hands
Red with the blood of Asoors slain !

Oochisravá, a horse of nine mouths, churned out of the ocean and assigned to Vishnu.

XXII.

And there was Umá, poising high
And whirling in her forceful arm
The spear that slew the minotaur ;
Great Rudra's spouse, her awful power,
E'en like the witching charm
Of her dark eyes, could oft confound
The immortal gods. Impatiently
She burn'd and panted for the war,
And with her shouts heaven's concave bower
Tremendous did resound.

XXIII.

From hell the furies dyed in blood,
Yoginis fierce, Dákinis dire,
And Sánkinis of face obscene,⁵
By Yama led,⁶ from brimstone sod,
Sprung to the realms of upper air,
Shaking their freckled locks of green
Above their hides of speckled hue,
And limbs all naked to the view
With snakes and scorpions wound.
Above them Káli waved her brand
Gilt deep with parents' tears,
The blood yet dripping from her hand ;
With large-wing'd vultures on the wake,
Of eager beak and ruffled breast,
And greedy dogs and jackals fierce,
Upon her conquests dire to make
Their hellish feast :

⁵ The *furies* of the Hindu mythology.

⁶ The Indian Pluto.

Now shouted she, now wildly danced,
 As when of yore she madly trod
 Her lord in opiate dreams entranced,
 Stretch'd on the vulgar clod.⁷

XXIV.

Nor was Indra wanting there,
 Who brought Cinnaras to the war,
 The minstrelsy of heaven !
 Songsters sweet, ah ! wherefore, say,
 Would you attempt the bloody fray,
 Untrain'd for struggles save of love ?
 And with him, from tho bowers above,
 The minor gods in troops they came,
 With club, or brand, or hatchet arm'd,
 As chance provided them ;
 Sásin,⁸ virago of the night,
 And Surjya, whose e'er wakeful sight
 The Ráhu's⁹ falsehood did betray,
 Vasanta¹ blithe, Kandarpa gay,²
 To whom fair virgins told their songs,
 Kuvera³ young, with jewels charm'd,
 Adored by ragged throngs,

⁷ Káli is most frequently represented as treading on the body of her sleeping husband.

⁸ The moon.

⁹ Ráhu Ketu, a demon, who, assuming the form of a god, shared the *amrita* with the gods. The sun and the moon discovered the deceit to Vishnu, who cut the giant in two. But the draught had been tasted, and the two parts became immortal. Ráhu still bears the old grudge to the sun and the moon, and by devcuring them causes eclipses; and Ketu, or the comet, is a dreadful object of alarm to all nations of the earth.

¹ Spring.

² Love.

³ God of riches.

Pavana, lord of tempests grim,
And Varun⁴ of the foamy sea,
The white-hair'd parent Kasyapa,⁵
With veteran arm still full of might,
And sage Vrihaspati, and Mangala red,⁶
Spirits of the starry beam,
And many more, brought in their aid ;
And with their roaring boist'rous sound
Sumeru's rocks did loud rebound.

xxv.

A host like that for multitude vast,
Had ne'er together met :
Not what of yore the admiring eyes
Of Priam saw on Ilium's plain,
By great Atrides marshall'd there ;
Nor e'en the dread array the Persian proud
Led to far Marathon's gory strand,
From Susá's ancient walls ;
Nor what for lost Jerusalem shed
Their life-blood 'neath the Saracen's sword ;
Nor yet the barbarous horde
That with the Hun to triumph sped,
Attila, name of dread !
Might with the goodly band compare,
The phalanx fierce of heaven,
That muster'd round Sumeru's lord.
He, towering far above the crowd,
As towers the palm on verdant ground,
On his triumphant chariot driven
From rank to rank majestic stirr'd,

God of waters.

⁴ Father of the minor gods.⁵ The stars, Jupiter and Mars.

Darting his eyes around :
 His rosary aside was cast,
 Aside the sacred Veds were flung,⁷
 While, fitted to each iron hand,
 He held the massive thunder fast,
 And spear, and sword, and buckler strong.
 Ah, man ! poor man ! for thy sad fate
 Sweet, wet-eyed Pity moans and sighs,
 No hopes of rescue now remain ;
 The gods have sworn nor lordly stall,
 Nor altar stone, nor palace hall,
 A breathing worm shall dare retain.

XXVI.

Upon Sumern's utmost verge
 Great Bruhmá's car now stood,
 By ramping steeds impatient drawn.
 "Come, Deos, follow me," he said,
 And lo ! that latest verge was past,
 And on, and bravely roll'd the car,
 As on its native clement,
 Floating upon the clouds so vast
 Impurpled by the sun.
 O ! mark through space the dread descent
 Of gods and angels brave,
 As if thou were of gossamer ;
 So boldly through the foamy surge
 Of the rolling ocean flood,
 The diver plies his daring trade,
 Full oft, alas, to meet his grave !

⁷ The arms of Bruhmá, according to the Puráns.

XXVII.

The sun now rayless, large, and red,
Athwart the globe was fast declining,
When on Orissá's sea-beat strand
The gods, their downward journey spod,
Alighted on the glist'ning sand.
The rushing waves with pleasure shining,
Rejoicing flow'd upon the shore,
Their lords to welcome and adore ;
But, heedless of their pious mirth,
And heedless of the landscape rare,
As hungry wolves at night go forth
To assail the fold's unguarded gate,
They hasten'd where
Pavana show'd the temple fair
To Jesus consecrate.

XXVIII.

Alone, upon the heath it stood,
From other haunts of men apart,
In hallow'd solitude.

The yew aye murmur'd by its gate,
As if it pour'd from gushing heart
The sacred frankincense of prayer ;
And soft the breeze intoxicate
Unfetter'd, pure, and wildly blew,
As if in homage to the spirit there,
Felt, though unopen to the view.

XXIX.

His vengeful barb Kumára drew,
And Siva gave his trident course,

And shaft and trident both together smote,
 Propell'd with heavenly force,
 The temple's column'd front sublime,
 And here a cornice down was brought,
 And there a shatter'd door.
 Ah, hands too rash, in evil hour
 Ye sped your weapons so !
 Great Nature shriek'd in woe,
 And sighing clouds did downward lour,
 And, lo ! as 'twere the thunder's roar,
 A horn was heard to bray ;
 And dropping, as from tempest blast,
 That by the temple sweeping past,
 A form of gentle hue,
 And manners mild, and thoughtful mood,
 And brightness such as never they,
 The gods, in beauty's prime,
 Could ever boast, came forth and stood.

XXX.

Unseen that glorious form before,
 Unknown from whence and how he came,
 His shining body struck dismay !
 Dread Siva quaked, as never shook
 From earthquake's shock a rotten tower,
 Kumára screen'd him hosts behind,
 Both speechless now and pale ;
 From Bruhmá's hands his bolts of fire
 Slipp'd to the ground, now grasp'd no more,
 And spear and shield down fell ;
 And Vishnu from the battle's van
 In trepidation rearward ran,
 And pale grew Umá's rosy cheek,

A moment erst so bright of bloom,
And fearful Káli fear'd to speak,
 Though back'd by imps of gloom,
And mystic spells, and magic charms ;
 The rest of lesser name
In wild despair stood rooted there,
Unable e'en to fly away :
So frogs ensnared by serpent's eye,
Stand fixéd fast when they would fly,
 Nestling in common fear ;
Such terror did his looks inspiro,
So mightier he, though not in arms :
And yet he did not look unkind,
Of sorrow more his gaze partook.

XXXI.

The seraph eyed with pitying gaze
The enormous force assembled there,
 Before him and around ;
Then, pointing upward to the air,
“Behold !” he said, “in Libra's scales
Ye have been weigh'd and wanting found,
Your state and sway alike are o'er.”
The gods look'd up, aloft the scale
Confirm'd the truthful seraph's tale ;
While thus to them he spake again :
“Spirits, this is the House of God,
Of Him who in the days of yore,
When chaos brooded over space,
 Call'd Nature forth, and ye,
And gave ye power to rule o'er men.
But ye, by Him so dignified,
Set over all His creatures here,

Ye have, alas ! forgot the day,
Forgotten too your Maker's name,
And to His dignity and grace
E'en laid your impious claim.
Through light intense, that Him e'er veils,
He hath observed your devious ways,
And thoughts unclean, and doings fell ;
For His are sound, unslumb'ring eyes :
But, slow to wrath, and suffering long,
Still patiently He did endure
With lust, and pride, and arrogance vain.
But now endurance lasts no more,
For now, in arms against Him risen,
Ye have His potent might defied,
And Him in His own house assail'd,
As if unguarded was the home
Belonging to Omnipotence,
And numbers were a name for strength.
Your effort, Deos, see has fail'd,
And now afar hence ye must roam :
I bring the unaltering, dread decree—
So long deserved it comes at length—
Go, speed ye straight, to hell repair ;
Leave ye the realms of sacred light ;
Jehovah will no longer bear
 Your lawless presence here ;
For He sole King must ever reign !
 Hence to the abodes of night !
 Hence to the brimstone sod !
The land where darkness reigns unblest,
And weary spirits never rest :
Where sinners be sinners alway,
 From hallow'd ground far driven ;

Immortal life to ye belong,
Go taste immortal pains,
With sighs, and wails, and blasphemies,
Amid the funeral screams of hell.”

XXXII.

My dream is o’er ; Sumeru’s gods—
Sumeru’s self hath past away,
By lightning blasted and by thunder scathed.
Within the deep Tartarean dell,
Perchance, yet tortured, unforgiven,
Unpitied, unreprieved, they rave and roar ;
But in high heaven their ancient sway
They hold no moro.
On bleak Vycant no archéd bower
A shed to Vishnu now affords,
Umbrageous and obscure ;
Nor Lakshmi loiters there her prime,
In breathing⁸ beauty bathed.
Kailása gray, by thunder riven,
Brightens no more ’neath Umá’s spell,
Its happy fields grown wild ;
Nor Siva comes to reassert
His iron rule thereon again.
Indra, with his Cinnaras mild,
And Apsarás born of the main,
Hath Swarga gay renounced and left,
His halls all echoless and cold—
Inglorious in repose ;
And never more ye may behold

⁸ The body of Lakshmi, according to the Puráns, breathes of the lotus, the fragrance being perceptible from a great distance.

The gods and sprites so deft
 Wanton upon the craggy mound,
 Or in the woody glades,
 Or happy walks, and sylvan shades,
 Move loftily and slow ;
 Or where resistless torrents sweep,
 Or milder streamlets gently flow,
 Or where the ocean surges bound,
 Fit haunts for such as they !
 Sing songs, or play, or sleep,
 In morning hour, or at bright noon,
 Or when the mists of evening close,
 Or 'neath the autumn moon.
 That day, when Brúhmá was uncrown'd,
 With him to hell they did depart,
 By fiery tempest whirl'd away ;
 Eternal justice doom'd them all
 Who had their lot together wound,
 And none may them again recall
 To envied bliss, and boundless power,
 And dignity sublime.

XXXIII.

My dream is o'er, and past their reign
 From dark Himávan's shaggy brow ;
 And every art of man once more
 Their ancient service to restore
 Is fruitless now and vain.
 Glory on earth ! Jehovah's sway
 Alone endureth now !
 Alone it passeth not away !

XXXIV.

My lay hath ceased : ah ! do not deem
The poet's dream an idle song,
And nothingness, and phantasy.
A light o'er India sheds its gleam,
Life's everlasting fount, the Deity !
 Hath burst the land upon,
As, at creation's early dawn,
O'er moving billows burst the sun ;
And 'neath the lustre melts away
 The gloom of ages long :
Thus read the vision of my lay,
The burden of its melody.⁹

⁹ The above allegory of the introduction of Christianity into India was written as the idea arose; but the author does not wish that it should be concluded from it that he is, or desires to be regarded as, a Christian. For an expression of his personal religious belief he would refer the reader to the Essay entitled "Half-Hours with Nature; or, Explorations for the Truth," in Vol. I. of the First Series of his works.

INDIAN BALLADS.

MY NATIVE LAND.

I.

My native land, I love thee still !
There's beauty yet upon thy lonely shore ;
And not a tree, and not a rill,
But can my soul with rapture thrill,
Though glory dwells no more.

II.

My fallen country ! on thy brow
The ruthless tyrants have engraved thy shame,
And laid thy haughty grandeur low ;
Yet even thus, and even so,
I love to lisp thy name.

III.

What though those temples now are lone
Where guardian angels long did dwell ;
What though from brooks that sadly run,
The naiads are for ever gone—
Gone with their sounding shell !

IV.

And haunted shades and laurel bowers
 Resound not now the minstrel's fiery lay,
 'And, e'en though deck'd with orient flowers,
 They ne'er recall those witching hours,
 For ever past away :

V.

My heart yet may not cease to burn
 For thy sweet woodlands, and thy sunny shore ;
 Though oft unconscious it will turn,
 Unconscious sigh, unconscious yearn
 For glorious days of yore !

VI.

Those days of mythic tale and song,
 When dusky warriors, in their martial pride,
 Strode thy sea-beat shores along,
 While with their famo the valleys rung,
 And turn'd the foe aside.

VII.

Then sparkled woman's brilliant eye,
 And heaved her heart, and panted to enslave ;
 And beauteous veils and flow'rets shy,
 In vain to hide those charms did try
 That flash'd to woo the brave.

VIII.

My fallen country ! where abide
 Thy envied splendour, and thy glory now ?
 The Páthán's and the Mogul's pride,
 Spread desolation far and wide,
 And stain'd thy sinless brow.

IX.

In freedom's shrine, the slave alone
 Now dwells—a lasting monument of thy shame !
 The mighty and the brave are gone ;
 Thy hallow'd triumphs overthrown—
 The trophies of their fame !

X.

But still the sun his noon tide ray
 Darts proudly on thy mountains towering round ;
 And heedless winds with streamlets play,
 As slow they murmur on their way,
 Through th' lovely, classic ground.

XI.

And human naiads love to roam
 Where reckless sweep thy regal rivers bold ;
 By temple, and by shatter'd dome,
 Of gods the consecrated home,
 The hallow'd shrines of old !

XII.

And beauty's eye retains its fire,
 What though its lightnings flash not for the brave ;
 And beauteous bosoms yet aspire,
 With passion strong and warm desire,
 To wake the crouching slave.

XIII.

My country ! fallen as thou art,
 My soul can never cease to heave for thee :
 I feel the dagger's edge, the dart
 That rankles in thy widow'd heart,
 Thy woeful destiny !

XIV.

I cannot choose but love thee yet ;
 And, while I rove thy fragrant meads along,
 I only wish I could forget
 That thy sun hath for ever set,
 Sweet land of love and song !¹

THE PARRICIDE'S DEATH.

Koombho, king of Mewár, was murdered by his son Oodá, commonly called *Hatiáro*, or the murderer. Oodá was killed by lightning; an accident which was generally recognised as a visitation of God's anger, and an earnest of severer punishments.

I.

'Twas midnight : on the brawling stream
 The shadow of each buttress slept,
 And softly, 'neath the moon's pale beam,
 The pensive cypress wept ;
 The warder watch'd upon the tower,
 And oft look'd out to read the hour,
 Impatient for the morn ;
 The watchfire's light was burning low ;
 The sentinel paced, with footsteps slow,
 The ramparts all forlorn.

¹ The following beautiful stanza was added, to a presentation copy of the poem, by the late Rev. J. H. Parker :—

“ Nay, not *for ever* set thy sun ;
 Truth's brighter, holier sun shall rise to shine :—
 See, even now, the dawn begun,
 A glorious course thou yet may'st run,
 Beneath the beamings of that ' Sun
 Of Righteousness' Divine.”

II.

But hark ! that heavy, fearful groan—
 That shriek of wild affright !
 O ! whence arose that dying moan
 Upon the calm midnight ?
 The warder heard, and in his hand
 Unsheath'd he held his faithful brand,
 With night-dew cold and chill ;
 The undaunted guard his footsteps stay'd,
 On dagger's hilt his hand he laid,
 But all around was still.

III.

'Twas silent all ; the sound had died,
 No voice was heard again ;
 The warder thought the wind had sigh'd
 That shriek of woe and pain ;
 And little reck'd the guard to know
 If it was voice of friend or foe,
 The castle-walls were strong,
 Well barréed was the massy gate
 That darkly frown'd in solemn state,
 And he was bold and young.

IV.

The midnight slowly pass'd away,
 And beam'd the morning light ;
 The orient usher'd in the day
 In purple vestments dight :
 The warder slept upon the tower,
 For past was now the watching hour ;

And from the ramparts lone,
 Down to the barrack's lowly room,
 To seek for slumber in its gloom,
 The sentinel was gone.

V.

Wake, slumberers, wake ! for wild alarms
 And lamentations load the air,
 And women, in their full-blown charms,
 Are rending their dark hair :
 Great Koombho sleeps the sleep of death,
 Say, who bereaved him of his breath ?
 His couch is red with gore ;
 And on his breast tho wound is deep ;
 The hoary monarch lies asleep—
 Alas, to wake no more !

VI.

The dagger in his red, right hand,
 Behold the murderer there !
 Encircled by a servile band,
 He stands with dagger bare ;
 With stealthy pace at midnight hour,
 Alone he cross'd the royal bower,
 And stood his sire beside ;
 His poniard pierced the sleeper's heart :
 But why that shuddering, ominous start,
 Thou impious parricide ?

VII.

Around they stood, but none to brave
 The dark Hatiáro's frown ;

There throng'd the coward and the slave,
 And low they knelt them down.
 With horror struck his subjects heard,
 And, like a stream by tempest stirr'd,
 Their stifled murmurs ran :
 A gloomy fate the clouds reveal'd ;
 Ho trembled, and his senses reel'd,
 His cheeks were pale and wan.

VIII.

Live, murderer, live ! thine is the crown,
 And thine be haggard care !
 And on thy path may demons frown—
 The imps of dark despair !
 Live, to be hated and despised ;
 Reign, to be tortured and chastised
 By furies of the mind ;
 And still with blood thy hands be wet ;
 A darker vengeance waits thee yet,
 And only lags behind.

IX.

O ! mark his heart's convulsive fears,
 His anxious, restless eyes,
 His bristling hair and burning tears,
 His bursting sobs and sighs !
 Mysterious terrors move around ;
 No peace he finds on hallow'd ground ;
 His throne how dearly bought !
 No jewell'd crown thy head will hide,
 Thou foul, detested parricide ;
 God's vengeance sleepeth not !

X.

Look up, behold ! what bodes the sky ?
 Alas, thou canst not tell !
 The murky clouds are hurrying by,
 Above the moor and dell :
 And dost thou hear a stifled scream ?
 Alas, Hatiáro ! 'tis a dream,
 Dreamt often o'er and o'er :
 But, lo ! 'tis past, Heaven's dread decree ;
 The death-shot parts, it speeds to thee :
 Hatiáro dreams no more !

XI.

And fair again the blue sky shone,
 The shaft of vengeance sped ;
 The tempests and the clouds were gone,
 And gone the lightnings red.
 With mute surprise men gaping stood,
 And horror thrill'd the creeping blood,
 No trickling tear-drops fell :
 Unwept, unblest, he found his fate ;
 What darker terrors yet await,
 No mortal tongue can tell.

JEEJEE'S BRIDAL.

Sháhjee, the son of Málójee, a Mahrattá robber, and Jeejee, the daughter of Jádoo Ráo, a Rájpoot chief, were the parents of the great Sivájee. The following story respecting their union has been borrowed mainly from Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattás*.

I.

THEY met—but not as lovers meet
 Beneath the peepul-tree ;

Nor ambush'd in the rosy dell,
 By purling streamlet free :
 Where Jádoo held his lofty cheer
 His friends and liegemen crowded near,
 And Sháhjee, with his sire along,
 Came there to list to Jeejee's song.

II.

Sweet flow'rets graced the proud saloon,
 But, sweetest of them all,
 The chieftain's merry, cherub child
 Illumed her father's hall !
 With happy heart, unbridled glee,
 She laugh'd a playmate young to see ;
 And rush'd to greet Málójee's heir,
 And clasp'd him on her bosom fair.

- III.

Delighted Jádoo mark'd their mirth ;
 They play'd, they laugh'd, they sung ;
 Through vaulted roof and lofty aisle
 Their pealing accents rung.
 The father's raptured heart beat high,
 He call'd his little prattler nigh,
 Caress'd her with a parent's pride,
 And smiling named her Sháhjee's bride.

IV.

She knew not what her father said ;
 But welcome still they came—
 The words, that fondly link'd her thus
 To Sháhjee's lovéd name :

Her smiling eyes entranced she raised,
 She clapp'd her hands, her sire she praised,
 Who turn'd and said, " These children fair
 Would surely make a happy pair."

V.

Málojéec heard, and straight up-sprung :
 " Thy words are past and gone,
 Thy daughter, Jadoo, hence I hold
 Betrothéd to my son."
 The Rájpoot stared, then spoke with scorn—
 " My child for thine is too high-born,
 The words I said were told in jest,
 Go, lull thy flatt'ring dreams to rest."

VI.

" Lightly I'll hold a chieftain's truth,
 If thou shouldst faithless prove ;
 The pledge has past, attest it, friends,
 Attest, great Heaven above ! "
 Málojee spoke, then left the cheer ;
 His strippling follow'd him in fear,
 For on his father's face he read
 Impetuous anger, fierce and dread.

VII.

They marvell'd much—the youthful pair—
 Why they should ever part ;
 And Jeejee wept when Sháhjee went,
 And felt a lonely heart :
 Her mother chid, her father frown'd ;
 And other children play'd around ;

But Jeejee lost her joyous tone,—
She play'd apart, she play'd alone !

VIII.

A lonely child—but lovely still,
Sweet Jeejee grew in years ;
Her wishful eyes were lit with smiles,
 But oftener still with tears :
She had no care, but was not gay ;
In quiet pass'd her life away ;
She trill'd her songs, she cull'd her flowers,
Was pensive still in happiest hours.

IX.

And Sháhjee 'neath a parent's care,
Grew up to war and fame ;
Exultant bore a warrior's arms,
 And own'd a warrior's name :
His veteran father's steps he trod,
In dreadful raids and forays rode,
And cursed stern Jádoo's stubborn pride
That scorn'd with him to be allied.

X.

That spark of light, that partial beam
Which lit his morning hour,
A faithful flame it linger'd still
 To nerve his soul with power ;
And heaved beneath his iron vest
The passions of his youthful breast ;
He dreamt for him a chaplet wove
Of glory, fame, and Jeejee's love.

XI.

Málojee dreamt a kindred dream ;
 He saw an angel maid,—
 From heaven she came, she came to him,
 And thus to him she said :
 “ Thy son must marry Jeejee fair,
 I have mark’d them for a happy pair,
 A chief shall spring from their embrace,
 The pride and glory of his race ;
 Haste now, to Jádoo speed amain,
 Thy suit he dares not still disdain.”

XII.

The vision fled ; but at his feet
 He found her favours strown ;
 Silver and gold, and jewels rare,
 A treasure now his own :
 And soften’d now was Jádoo’s pride,
 And Sháhjee clasp’d a Rájpoot bride,
 While Jeejee, ’mid her blushes, smiled,
 As sweetly as when yet a child.

JELÁLUDEEN KHILIFI.

Málleck Feroze, otherwise called Jeláludeen, was the son of Málleck, a soldier of fortune and chief of the Afghán tribe called Khiliji. He was raised to the throne by a powerful faction, on the murder of Keikobád, of which he was believed to be the principal instigator : but he affected extreme regret at having his high office forced on him ; and, while on the throne, was remarkable for his exceeding humility, clemency, and simplicity of manners.

I.

I AM a king, but why forget
 That I am still a man ?

And why should gilded baubles lure,
 And thoughts unclean, and deeds impure
 Engross life's little span ?
 Who in the pride and pomp of state
 Hath ever found his spirit's rost ?
 In Glory's thraldom who was blest ?

II.

Why impious must the vassal bend
 To me his supple knee ?
 And wear for me a badge of scorn,
 And curse the hour when he was born
 A slave for life to be ?
 Rather should I his cause befriend,
 Protect from shame meek Poverty's child,
 And guard his honour undefiled.

III.

What is there in a pageant's blaze
 To cheer a monarch's eye ?
 And why should flattery's voice subdue,
 Or why should dazzling trinkets woo,
 Or vests of purple dye,
 That soul which God has deign'd to raise
 Above the reach of vulgar pain,
 And fortune's frown, and pride's disdain ?

IV.

I scorn the applause of servile men,
 The wicked passions shun ;
 Nor would I barter for renown,
 A richer jewel than my crown,

The feelings which I own :
 I seek the poor in every den ;
 The rustic's cheerful hearth is mine,
 I laugh with him—with him repine.

v.

The friends with whom my footsteps ranged
 O'er barren rock and hill,
 To them with haughtiness to speak,
 This faithful heart would surely break,
 And be for ever still :
 I find my feelings are unchanged,
 Or I these royal robes would scorn,
 And be again what I was born.

vi.

When I was low I ne'er repined,
 Nor cursed my humble lot ;
 I never ask'd for wealth or pride,
 Ne'er turn'd from poverty aside,
 My duty ne'er forgot ;
 I sought for peace within my mind :
 A man content I roved the green,
 In folly's path was never seen.

vii.

The sick, the grieved, I tend them still
 Beside their beds of straw ;
 A welcome guest where'er I come,
 I always seek the poor man's home :
 My word, they say, is law ;
 Then be fulfill'd a monarch's will,

Avaunt, fly Fear, let Discord cease,
And come and bless us, meek-eyed Peace.

VIII.

I ask'd not to be raised to state,
I never sought a throne ;
With greater pleasure I could dwell,
My friends and I within a cell,
Than thus reign all alone—
The greatest man among the great !
No, rather would I choose to be
The poorest of the company.

IX.

In chains they bring the guilty bound,
To take his hapless doom ;
He comes with hope, he comes with dread,
In wrath to hew his votive head
Shall mortal man presume ?
No, let him pass ; but all around
The lenient judgment disapprove ;
Still let him pass, for God is love !

X.

O Thou ! who from the lowliest life
Hast raised me 'bove my peers,
When all the world lies hush'd in sleep,
Before Thy throne my soul doth creep,
In penitence and tears ;
Since to this state, with peril rife,
Lord ! Thou hast dragg'd me in Thy wrath,
In pity light my rugged path.

THE PROPHECY.

Sanga, Prithu, and Jeimál, the three sons of Ráná Raemul of Mewár, sought the priestess of Cháruni Devi, at Náhrá Mugro, or the Tiger's Mount, to learn which of them was destined to succeed their father on the throne. The priestess prophesied in favour of the eldest, who had taken his seat on a panther's hide, which she interpreted as being symbolical of a throne. Sanga afterwards became a great king, and was the most formidable enemy of Bábér in India.

I.

THREE brothers stood before the shrine—
 They all were young and bold ;
 To greet them from the Tiger's Mount
 Came forth the priestess old,
 The priestess to whose ken was given
 The secrets of the earth and heaven.

II.

She gave them seats ; the youngers sate
 Upon her pallet low,
 On panther-hide the elder sat,
 And sat the priestess too.
 “Now speak, my children, speak to me,
 What to this shrine your errand be.”

III.

Their purpose soon the brothers told ;
 They sought the sacred shrine
 To learn for whom it was ordain'd,
 By Devi's will divine,
 To sit on Mewár's royal throne,
 When Raemul's glorious reign was done.

IV.

The priestess shook her hoary head :
 " Much, much misgives my soul ;
 I must not break your hallow'd love,
 Nor future leaves unroll ;
 Now you are happy, happy be,
 Nor seek to learn Heaven's mystery."

V.

Like obstinate children still they press'd ;
 They vex'd the priestess old ;
 She rose, she made a mystic sign,
 Some mystic words she told ;
 And when she trimm'd the flickering light,
 The winds sunk down, was hush'd the night !

VI.

With earnest voice the priestess spoke ;
 The brethren heard in fear ;
 She spoke aloud with dauntless brow—
 " Hear, noble warriors, hear !
 On panther-hide he sits alone,
 The prince who wins his father's throne.

VII.

" Nay, start not, Sanga, Heaven ordains
 In triumph thou shalt reign ;
 I see that Ráos and Rájáhs frown,
 But they shall frown in vain :
 I see them stoop and hail their king,
 And on their knees their tributes bring.

VIII.

“ And thine, great Prithu, thine shall be
 A soldier’s proudest fame,
 A poet’s honour shall be thine,
 But not a royal name ;
 To thee the Deos give no throne,
 And Sanga he shall reign alone.

IX.

“ The star ² of Bednore shines for thee,
 And thine shall be the bliss
 To love, and be beloved again,—
 What seek’st thou more than this ?
 But passion leads thee onward yet,
 A traitor seals great Prithu’s fate.³

X.

“ And Jeimál, thee with pride elate
 And fired with lust I see ;
 False to thy vows, thou must not hope
 A royal king to be :
 I see thee swerve from honour’s path,
 Beware an injured father’s wrath.⁴

² Tárrá Báe.

³ He was killed by a brother-in law, whom he had punished for ill-treating his sister, and who subsequently, feigning great friendship for him, found an opportunity to be avenged.

⁴ Tárrá Báe of Bednore having preferred her hand to him who should restore her father to his lost dominions, Jeimál accepted the terms, but, attempting to ravish her before fulfilling his engagements, he was killed by her indignant father. She was subsequently married by Prithu, who accomplished her father’s restoration.

XI.

“ A glorious life, O Sanga, ’s thine,
 And thine a glorious throne ;
 And prosperous thou shalt reign, my child,
 And thou shalt reign alone :
 I see thy foemen fly the field,
 With broken spear and shatter’d shield.

XII.

“ The Pátháns in their pride have cross’d
 The Peelákhál’s yellow stream,
 Their armours, ’neath the evening sun,
 With orient lustre gleam ;
 But Sanga holds his royal throne,
 The Lodi’s⁵ fled—his hosts are gone.

XIII.

“ And Báber comes with laurell’d brow,
 A fugitive though he be ;
 His squadrons shake the tented field,
 But, prince, they shake not thee !
 Thou stout of heart, thou stout of hand,
 Can Moslem warrior ’gainst thee stand ?

XIV.

“ Nay, smile not, Sanga, not unmix’d
 The boon of Heaven can flow ;
 Fergháná’s chief has dealt the wound,
 Has smote the heavy blow ;
 But quails not yet thine iron heart,
 And Mewár’s sov’reign still thou art.

⁵ Ibráhim Lodi.

XV.

“ Exults the victor in his pride ?
 He marks the bloody plain ;
 He counts his chieftains stiff and cold
 Who ne’er shall fight again ;
 And Báber’s heart is sinking low,
 The victor dreads his vanquish’d foe.

XVI.

“ But look, the magic fire burns low—
 I see a vacant throne !
 He fell not on the battle-field,
 Then where is Sanga gone ?⁶
 I have no might to tell thee more,
 The fire is quench’d, the spell is o’er ! ”

GOGÁ CHOHÁN.

Gogá Chohán, with his forty-five sons, fell fighting against Máhmoód of Ghazni, on the banks of the Sutledge.

L

A bold, determined, youthful band
 The veteran father led ;
 And firm they stood beside the flood,
 To share one gory bed :
 And the hurricane’s shock, it cleaved the rock,
 And wild the storms did blow ;
 But, reckless of the tempest’s wrath,
 They waited for the foc.

⁶ Sanga died under suspicious circumstances. Some say he was poisoned by his prime-minister and chief nobles, who, weary of the privations of the field, were anxious for peace even under a foreign yoke.

II.

The torrent ran with fierce delight,
 With wild, tumultuous roar :
 But wilder far the Moslems pour'd
 Upon that dreary shore ;
 And gush'd dark blood into the flood,
 While stretch'd the valiant lay,
 Or, closer still, with mortal hate,
 They mingled in the fray.

III.

The torrent rush'd with blood and foam
 Commingling in its flow ; . . .
 While fiercer still the cry arose,
 And heavier fell the blow ;
 And to the grave sunk spirits brave,
 The fearless and the bold :
 His hardy sons around him fell,
 Still fought the veteran old.

IV.

O God ! it was a fearful sight—
 In manhood's prime they lay,
 And there the hoary father stood,
 Like panther fierce at bay ;
 His blood-red eye he raised on high,
 Then broke his bursting heart,
 But forward still, and to the last
 He play'd a patriot's part.

V.

In vain, alas ! he fought and bled,
 In vain he braved the charge,

In vain with sabre fierce he smote,
 And heaved his broken targe ;
 He sinks to die, his gray locks lie
 Exposed upon the shore ;
 The exulting victor onward moves,
 The battle dread is o'er.

VI.

A bloody harvest thou hast reap'd,
 And thou hast won a throne,
 Go, victor, snatch the diadem rich,
 And wear it all alone !
 A deathless name, eternal fame
 He shares alike with thee,
 Or shares by far the nobler part,
 Who died but to be free.

VII.

At midnight, 'neath the lightning's flash,
 And 'neath the tempest's roar,
 The exulting surge doth still recount
 The mighty deeds of yore ;
 How with red light, thro' gloom of night,
 The sword of Gogá gleam'd,
 And how his sons, in glorious death,
 Their country's fame redeem'd.

VIII.

But none there are to heed the tale,
 Though loud the shores resound,
 And though from rock and glen those notes
 With treble force rebound :

Those days are o'er, and now no more
 The fire of valour burns ;
 The spirit of the past is gone,
 Nor ever yet returns.

PRITHU RÁI.⁷

When Jysing, King of Kanouj, assumed supremacy over all the other princes of India, he gave a great feast at his Court, and, ordaining that the same should close with the marriage of his daughter Sunjogtá, he invited all competitors for her hand to be present at the cheer. The fame of Sunjogtá's beauty and accomplishments drew there the chivalry of Hindustán; but Prithu Rái, King of Delhi, the Roland of his age, did not answer to the summons, lest his presence should be construed as an acknowledgment of Jysing's superiority. Being determined, however, to wed the daughter of Jysing, he surprised him in the midst of his festivities, and carried off the bride.

I.

THE feast was spread in Kanouj hall,
 The chivalry of the east was there ;
 The proudest princes, drest in pall,
 Partook of Jysing's cheer :
 And blushing sate the high-born maids,
 Or led the dance with young knights gay,
 Or heard the story of their raids,
 Or trill'd the sweet and love-lorn lay,
 While rung the rafters of the hall
 With the music of the festival.

⁷ When this poem was written the author was not aware that Dr. Horace Hayman Wilson had published a much nobler effusion on the subject before him.

II.

In all the state of pomp and power,
Convivial sat the haughty king ;
And by him bloom'd the fairest flower,
That ever graced an eastern bower,
Or parent's yearning bosom blest :
Around, in gorgeous habits drest,
His well-arm'd vassals stood ;
While maidens of the royal blood
The bridal song essay'd to sing,
And tuned each wild, discordant string.

III.

The princess sate in bridal vest ;
Her timid eyes were downcast hung,
While flutter'd in her youthful breast
The passions which her maidens sung ;
Upon her check the roses warr'd,
And now 'twas red, now deadly pale ;
Her eyelids kept a steady guard,
Nor moved to tell a lover's tale ;
Around her press'd the rival throng,
She heeded not their sport or song.

IV.

Her heart, 'twas fluttering like a dove,
With maiden fear and maiden love ;
She saw not where her eyes to rest ;
They miss'd the bravest and the best,
Whose deeds in ballads she had sung,
While on his neck she fondly hung :

Why came not there her lovéd one ?
 Was he to battle's hurricane gone ?
 Or did his lofty, stubborn heart
 His rivals scorn and keep apart ?

V.

He came not, for his haughty knee
 Disdains to bend in homage mean ;
 It bends alone to God and thee—
 To thee, his bosom's sov'reign queen :
 But, far unlike yon servile herd,
 To Jysing owns no vassalage he ;
 And inly frowns the Ráhtore lord
 By beardless youth defied to be :
 The bridal o'er, to mar his pride,
 He vows to Delhi's gates to ride.

VI.

The palace-hall is festive still,
 The minstrel's harp its witching thrill
 Imparts to all the nobles round ;
 According to the varying sound
 Move footsteps brave, and footsteps fair,
 And press the elastic, buoyant air ;
 The Chohán's pride seems all forgot,
 Alone the princess mourns her lot,
 No smile is bright'ning in her eye,
 She strives to hush the struggling sigh.

VII.

When lo ! through th' castle's stately hall
 The clash of armour loud is heard,

And echoes from the ramparts tall
 The tramp of steeds by foemen spurr'd.
 Why start from mirth those haughty lords ?
 Why are their hands upon their swords ?
 Again, again ! o'er crag and dell,
 And louder sounds the bugle-horn,
 And, as its proud notes proudly swell,
 It seems to herald pride and scorn.

VIII.

“ Now, who be these ? seneschal ride
 And learn their errand straight for me ; ”
 Thus spoke the Ráhtore in his pride,
 A proud and angry man was he ;
 “ Divine what purpose draws them here,
 From what far-distant realms they roam ;
 If to our towers in peace they come,
 To join, as friends, our open cheer,
 Or reckless haste our wrath to dare,
 And wake the lion in his lair ? ”

IX.

A single chief comes in alone :
 Alone ! where are his comrades gone ?
 They stand beside the palace-gate,
 The bugle's dread alarm they wait,
 While lone he moveth through the band,
 And by the princess takes his stand :
 A noble suitor cry the maids ;
 The chieftains draw their shining blades ;
 His bearing hath the secret told,
 It is the Chohán warrior bold !

X.

Bold as the lion's whelp he stood,
 Or war-horse waken'd to the strife,
 Surrounded by a servile brood
 Surcharged with pride, with malice rife ;
 The bugle's wild alarm he blew,
 And straight his barons throng'd the hall,
 A daring force, in numbers few,
 But well prepared to win, or fall ;
 Around him muster'd too his foes,
 With bitter hate, in deadly close.

XI.

But see, the lovely bride is won,
 The feast is o'er,—the Chohán gone :
 With reckless falchion in his hand,
 He strode through all that hostile band,
 And none was there to cross his path,
 Though foam'd the king with haughty wrath.
 On coursers fleet they hied afar,
 'Mid clang of arms, and shouts of war ;
 And midnight came, beneath the ray
 Of stars they vanish'd far away.

NÁDIR SHÁH.

I.

He came, as from the thunder-cloud
 Bursts the lurid spark of death ;
 He came ; the furies in his train,
 Destruction in his breath.

II.

Like wild tornado of the deep,
Or lava's burning wave,
Onward rush'd the impetuous tide
Of steel-clad heroes bravo.

III.

Their reeking blades were red and bare,
Ambition was their star;
Horror strode from strand to strand,
Wherever roll'd the war.

IV.

“Rear the crimson banner high!
Unceasing ply the sword!”
And blood in torrents cleaved the plains
At Nádir's awful word.

V.

The mountain-streamlet's lucid tide
Polluted was with gore,
And the green land where plenty smiled
Was wasted to a moor.

VI.

Above the victor's shout arose
The agonising cry
Of widow'd mother for her child,
Her only pride and joy.

VII.

Her pride, her hope, her staff, her stay,
 Her sole belovéd one :
 She pleads in vain, O look no more !
 The brutal work is done !

VIII.

There palsied age stands lone in fear,
 Or suppliant kneels to Heaven,
 Here virgin innocence stoops to death,
 Or asks to be forgiven.

IX.

The bloodhound riots heedless on,
 His heart is proof to tears ;
 His haughty ruffians darkly frown,
 And closer grasp their spears.

X.

They grasp their spears, they light the torch,
 Behold, the flames aspire !
 Up to the sky the dun clouds rise ;
 O cease your ruthless ire !

XI.

The vengeful sword, the pitiless torch,
 Have wrought the deed of shame ;
 Imperial Ind' lies sack'd and torn ;
 O cursed be Nádir's name !

XII.

The widows and the orphans plead—
They plead to Heaven with tears ;
Look, victor ! look, what clouds obscure
The sunset of thy years !

XIII.

Go, tell thy warlike deeds to fame,
And let them blazon'd be ;
Let Persian satraps throng around,
To bend the servile knee :

XIV.

The hour of vengeance passeth not—
Behold, the daggers gleam !
Look, victor ! look ! behind—before !
Alas, it is no dream !

XV.

And none to stay the assassins' hands !
Must Nádir's sun then set ?
The widows' and the orphans' tears
Are slowly trickling yet.

GO WHERE GLORY CALLS THEE ;

OR,

THE MAHRETTÁ MOTHER'S ADDRESS TO HER SON.

I.

Go where glory calls thee ;
Pursue the path thy fathers trod ;
Let tyrants quake, let ramparts shake,
Where'er thou tread'st the sod :

And quench not yet thy fiery brand,
 And stay not yet thy bloody hand ;
 Let mothers weep, let empires burn,
 Before thy footsteps homeward turn ;
 Through seas of blood, through flames of fire,
 Press forward still with burning ire ;
 And never falter, ne'er be kind,
 Nor cast one ling'ring look behind,
 Nor turn one thought on me.

II.

The glorious wars thy fathers won,
 The glorious deeds which they have done,
 Remember thou with pride ;
 And let thy dearest effort be,
 Like them, to lead fair Victory,
 To spread thy terrors far and wide,
 That future men may learn the tale,
 How rush'd the whirlwind down their vale ;
 Then sleep, if fain thou slumber must,
 Let dust return to dust !
 But crown'd with glory, not with shame—
 Stain not a Mahrattá's sacred name.

III.

Behold the watch-fire's glowing light,
 Far o'er yon mountain gleaming bright,
 Where now, e'en now, our warriors proud
 To lead the foray crowd ;
 Be that, my son, thy beacon star :
 And tarry not my soldier-boy,
 War was thy father's dearest joy,
 With sword and brand he plunged afar,

And dared the darkest, deadliest strife,
And gave to war his life :
Now that the hero's dead and gone,
O prove thyself thy father's son !

IV.

Nay, heed not that I clasp thee now :
My heart is gushing o'er with love ;
I cannot mark that noble brow
Without a conscious flush of pride ;
Yet, shouldst thou c'er a recreant prove,
I'll dash thee from my side :
Rather lie dead upon the bloody shore,
Pierced with wounds and stain'd with gore,
Than play the crouching coward's part,
And break a widow'd mother's heart.

V.

The blazing meteor shines afar—
Behold, Beuhram's bloody star !
On to the field, where warrior's arm
E'en now the fire-brand tosses high,
And loud is heard the dread alarm,
And swift the venom'd arrows fly ;
Hark to the boisterous roar,
Resounded loud from land and shore !
Courage, boy ! for thou must ride
To join the battle-shock,
And thou must dare to breast the tide,
E'en as the rooted rock !

VI.

And now they've pass'd the farthest hill,
 And cross'd the torrent-wave ;
 I see them rushing onward still—
 For nought can stop the brave ;
 I see their flashing sabres gleam,
 I see their furious coursers prance,
 And, glist'ning 'neath the moon's pale beam,
 I see their nodding feathers dance ;
 The fearful yell, the dying groan,
 The raving cry, the stifled moan,
 From the far battle-field they come,
 To cheer a widow's dreary home :
 Yes, I love them, for thy father, boy,
 E'er felt in war his greatest joy.

VII.

Nay, dash those briny drops, my son,
 He died a soldier's death ;
 Where oft he marshall'd forth the free
 He fell, flush'd with victory,
 And crown'd with laurel-wreath ;
 Then check the rising tear and groan ;
 In spite of broken hearts and eyelids wet,
 The brightest star will set.

VIII.

Mark, where his steed impatient stands,
 Impatient for his wonted play,
 Impatient for the steel array,
 The pat of warrior's cheering hands :

Courage, boy ! our clansmen frown,
 And now again they call,
 From the far blazing city's wall,
 While streams and mountain-peaks reply :
 And wilt thou live a dastard lone ?
 Ah no ! I see thy lighten'd eyo
 Hath caught the wild, the ruddy glow,
 That lit whilom thy fathor's brow.

IX.

Go where glory waits thee !
 Now woe unto the Mogul's home,
 Let mothers blanch where'er you come,
 Let nought but blood thy course reveal ;
 And let that track so dreary be
 That c'en the tigress to her den
 May trace her lofty steps agen,
 The startled cobra leave its path,
 The bear suppress its awful wrath
 And in the quivering woods conceal ;
 For all on earth must crouch beside
 The fierce Mahrattá warrior's pride,
 While foreign princes quako to feel
 The vigour of Mahrattá steel.

THE REQUIEM OF TIMOUR.

I.

SLEEP, perturbéd spirit, sleep
 Within earth's quiet breast !
 Thy task of vengeance now is o'er ;
 Rest, ruthless conqueror, rest !

II.

As speeds the whirlwind o'er the wave
 With a resistless might,
 The torrent of thy wrath has roll'd
 Upon the field of fight.

III.

The world aghast has quaked beneath
 The terrors of thy frown ;
 Thy footsteps, they have trampled o'er
 The royal neck and crown.

IV.

With dire dismay the nations mourn'd,
 Who heard thy trumpet shrill ;
 The hardy Tártár felt within
 A strange, unusual thrill.

V.

In Persia's lands the Sophis wept,
 The Russians own'd a fear,
 Siberian warriors shrunk appall'd
 That dreadful note to hear.

VI.

Let Turkish widows, maids, and wives,
 Unfold the havoc done,
 When on Angorá's bloody field
 'The battle fierce was won.

VII.

When vengeance, lust, and carnage fed
 Upon the hostile plain,
 And bow'd imperial Ilderim,^s
 His haughty neck in chain.

VIII.

The prostrate Georgians own'd thy power,
 Thy splendour crouching gazed ;
 Confusion, terror, ruin wild,
 With equal fury blazed.

IX.

The burning sand, the fertile vale,
 Have groan'd beneath thy tread ;
 Thy hardy legions follow'd still,
 Where thou undaunted led.

X.

From Kábool's rocks thy crimson flag
 Stream'd proudly to the air ;
 Beneath were martial shields and spears,
 And sabres red and bare.

XI.

When dauntless still for natal ground
 The bloody Afgháns stood,
 Their hills resounded to thy roar,
 Their torrents ran with blood.

^s Bajázet, surnamed *Ilderim*, or the Thunderer.

XII.

The Indus' stormy waters fail'd
 To bar the victor's path ;
 And Delhi's burning towers confess
 The awful Scythian's wrath.

XIII.

A thousand terrors rode along
 By Gungá's quaking shore ;
 And hungry vultures scream'd above
 Thy sacred shrine, Hurdwár.

XIV.

The fire-brand pass'd, his track they traced
 By counting heaps of slain ;
 Upon that path the smiling flowers
 Will never bloom again.

XV.

The sites where cities proudly rear'd
 Their turrets to the sky,
 Are only mark'd by piles of stone
 Since Timour pass'd them by.

XVI.

And now he sleeps : rest, conqueror, rest !
 Thy vengeful task is o'er ;
 The trumpet's voice, though loud it speaks,
 Will wake thee never more !

XVII.

The world thy triumphs mark'd with dread ;
 Sleep, ruthless tyrant, sleep !
 That breathless terror now has pass'd,
 The world has ceased to weep.

XVIII.

But yet thy name, when told aloud,
 Emits a stirring sound ;
 And earth's remotest confines still
 Thy awful praise resound.

XIX.

Rest, perturbéd spirit, rest !
 Rest, thunderbolt of heaven !
 The avenger's rod, the victor's might,
 To thee conjoint were given.

THE WARRIOR'S RETURN.

When Mahárájáh Jeswant Sing, being defeated by Aurungzebe, fled for refuge to his own capital, his wife, with Spartan haughtiness, refused him admittance, saying,—“This man is an impostor, for the brave never return with dishonour. My husband sleeps on the field of battle.”

I.

HEARD ye that lofty pealing sound
 Upon the balmy air,
 The exulting shout that best proclaims
 The deeds which heroes dare ?

II.

In triumph blow their trumpets proud,
 The clouds repeat their voice ;
 Go, greet the laurell'd victors home,
 And bid our realms rejoice.

III.

Let poets tune their golden harps,
 Let maidens wear their smile,
 And young and old their cares lay by,
 And cease to mourn awhile.

IV.

What ! hear'st thou not their joyous din ?
 Behold, above the vale
 Their haughty plumes and ensigns red
 Are fluttering in the gale !

V.

And helmets cleft, and canvas torn,
 Proclaim the fighting done ;
 And neighing steeds, and bloody spears,
 Announce the battle won !

VI.

Alas ! the vision mocks my sight ;
 I see no gallant throng,
 No trophies meet my longing eyes ;
 Bid cease the joyous song.

VII.

That recreant slave is not my lord ;
Ne'er thus the brave return.
Go, bid the city-gates be barr'd,
And leave me lone to mourn.

VIII.

I know him not, I never knew
A low, ignoble love ;
My warrior sleeps upon the mead,
His soul hath soar'd above.

IX.

Upon the battle-field he lies,
His garments stain'd with gore ;
With sword in hand prepared he sleeps
To fight the battle o'er.

X.

His shiver'd shield, his broken spear,
Around him scatter'd lie ;
The iron-breasted Moslems shook
To see my hero die.

XI.

Where helmets rang, where sabres smote,
He found his gory bed :
Join, mourners, join, and loudly raise
The requiem of the dead.

XII.

Expel you vile impostor hence ;
 I will not trust his tale ;
 Our warriors on the crimson field
 Their chieftain's loss bewail.

XIII.

The mountain-torrent rushing down
 Can ne'er its course retrace,
 And souls that speed on glory's path
 Must ever onward press :

XIV.

Ay, onward press—to bleed and die,
 Triumphant still in death :
 Impostor, hence ! in other lands
 Go draw thy coward breath.

THE LAST MOMENTS OF PRATĀPA.²

I.

He cannot and he will not yield,
 Though every gorge and glen
 Is crowded now by desperate foes,
 And fled his war-worn men.

II.

He will not bow his haughty head,
 His royal 'scutcheon stain ;
 His friends are few, his hopes are lost,
 Yet he would fight again !

Vide Tod's *Rājasthán*, chap. xi. *Annals of Mewár.*

III.

Misfortunes crowd upon his path,
And clouds the sky deform,
But, stubborn still and unappall'd,
He yields not to the storm.

IV.

The traitor wretches taunt him now,
He deigns them no reply ;
His big heart mourns his country's doom,
But scorns the hireling's eye.

V.

Though on the naked sward he lies,
He covets not their shame ;
With pride he counts his sufferings o'er,
His deeds of deathless fame !

VI.

The tiger's den, the leopard's home,
The panther's awful lair,
He sought them 'neath the angry sky,
A covert shade to share.

VII.

And on the rocks his queen repos'd,
While darksome fell the shower,
Unbending still the Kshetriya's soul
Defied great Akbar's power.

VIII.

The wolves they whined before his path,
 Behind the shout arose—
 A vaunting shout of warlike glee—
 The shout of gathering foes !

IX.

But still he held his purpose high,
 Nor paused his daring soul,
 And fiercer burn'd the flame within,
 And burn'd without control.

X.

And fiercer did the fighting rage
 On blasted heath and moor,
 And many a valiant deed was done
 On Chumbul's lonely shore.

XI.

In every pass, in every glen,
 In every widow'd vale,
 With weeping eyes his children trace
 His valour's bloody tale.

XII.

And moated walls, and mountain cairns,
 And caverns dark and grim,
 Which witness'd oft his struggles fierce,
 Now loudly speak of him.

XIII.

But life can bear no more, his race—
His glorious race is run ;
He sinks with every honour crown'd—
So sinks the setting sun !

XIV.

But O ! the Moslem's feet accurst
Are on his native plain,
The crescent-standard flouts the sky,
And will it flout in vain ?

XV.

That thought lies heavy on his heart ;
When ho for aye is gone,
Shall foreign princes proud assume
The Kshetriya's stainless throne ?

XVI.

And trampled 'neath their iron sway
Must hoary elders bend,
No arm to guard the Rájpoots' pride,
Their honour to defend ?

XVII.

His lofty heart is heaving now,
His eyes are fill'd with tears ;
O could he but repeat once more
His toil of bygone years !

XVIII.

His son, brave Umru, stands beside
 The dying warrior's bed,
 An heir of all his father's worth,
 In danger nursed and bred.

XIX.

He marks his father's heaving breast,
 He marks his weeping eye :
 " Speak, father, what thy bosom grieves ?
 And whence thy agony ? "

XX.

The hero's eyes are closing now,
 He draws his darling near,
 And strains him to his aching heart,
 And vents his boding fear.

XXI.

" Now swear, my boy, upon thy sword
 Thy country to defend,
 And swear that ne'er in homage mean
 Thy royal knees shall bend.

XXII.

" Eternal conflict thou must wage—
 Such as thy sire begun—
 To crush the haughty Moslem power,
 Or be thyself undone.

XXIII.

“Then will my soul sleep sound in peace,
 This troubled spirit rest :”—
 He closer drew his weeping child,
 And clasp’d him to his breast.

XXIV.

And in that warm embrace the boy
 Eternal warfare swore ;
 The father smiling closed his eyes,
 And then spake never more.

THE FLIGHT OF LAKHMAN SEN.¹

I.

THE breeze is fresh, the night is calm,
 The stars are shining clear ;
 And swift the vessel scuds the stream,
 Beneath the pale and partial beam :
 No haven safe is near.

II.

“Row on !” exclaims the impatient king ;
 His slaves their sinews strain ;
 And proudly onward cleaves the bark,
 The moon has waned, the night is dark,
 “Row on !” he cries again.

III.

A precious freight that vessel bears—
 O for the speed of light !

¹ Vide Stewart’s *History of Bengal*.

With moody and affected brow,
He sits apart upon the prow,
And marks the gloaming night.

IV.

With flashing eyes the victor came,
By sage and seer foretold ;
'Twas night, and in the royal halls
The lights were flickering on the walls,
When rush'd the warrior bold.

V.

Through gay saloons the hero trod,
While gleam'd the avenging blade ;
And gasping warriors strew'd the ground,
The bleeding guards lay stretch'd around,
The dying o'er the dead !

VI.

Behold, to heaven the flames arise !
And hark those sounds of woe !
With heavy hearts, and boding fears,
See women mark, through burning tears,
The progress of the foe.

VII.

Alone, apart, the monarch stood,
With grief and terror dumb :
Ah, hapless, hopeless, friendless king !
What doom of shame to thee they bring,—
And nearer still they come.

VIII.

The bark was launch'd in haste upon
 The water's billowy breast ;
 Reft of his throne and regal pride,
 A fugitive o'er the fickle tide,
 A monarch sought for rest.

IX.

O whither, whither wouldst thou fly
 To screen that hated head ?
 Hide, darkness, hide his shameful flight,
 O hide it from the beams of light
 Beneath a watery bed !

X.

But vain the wish, the bark bears on
 E'on like a battle-steed,
 And flings the curling billows by,
 While still is heard the impatient cry,
 "O for the lightning's sped ! "

SIVÁJEE :

His haughty reception at the court of Aurungzebe, confinement,
 flight, and eternal enmity.

I.

THEY led him to the stately hall,
 Before the royal throne,
 Where, towering in the pomp of power,
 The tyrant sat alone ;
 And knights and nobles stood around,
 Elate with haughty pride,
 And slaves, in gorgeous tinsel dress'd,
 Awaited by their side.

II.

He knelt before the tyrant's throne,
 But caught no courtly smile ;
 The monarch look'd with eye of scorn—
 Then darkly gazed awhile ;
 And minions proud, whose hearts had quail'd
 When told his name of fear,
 Now mock'd the valiant Sivájee
 With cold respect and sneer.

III.

He could not bear their servile scorn—
 The scorn of vassals low,
 The passions of his stubborn heart
 Were gathering on his brow ;
 His bosom, plough'd with manly scars,
 The records of his fame,
 Now heaved with all a warrior's wrath :
 He was not born to shame.

IV.

A fearful light shone in his eyes ;
 Its meaning who could tell ?
 And shook his frame, and from his lips
 Some harsh expressions fell :
 He stepp'd aside, his passions dark
 Unable to control,
 And struggled still, but yet in vain,
 To curb his lofty soul.

V.

O'erpower'd he sunk upon the ground,
 But straight arose again :

This insult, tyrant, thou shalt rue—
 He never frowns in vain.
 With bloody purpose in his heart
 He stood aloof—alone,
 But sheath'd still the avenging blade
 Was sleeping in his zone.

VI.

In dudgeon high he left the Court,
 Nor ask'd the king's command ;
 But found himself deceived, betray'd,
 A captive in the land.
 But who can cross the fox's wile ?
 Control the eagle free ?
 The royal guards are shrewd and true,
 But where is Sivájee ?

VII.

The bird has flown ; no stubborn cage
 Its wily heart could tame ;
 For deadlier works of death prepare—
 He comes with sword and flame !
 Ye ply to trap with subtle words ;
 That feeble art is vain ;
 The trusting bird, when once deceived,
 Will never trust again.

VIII.

No, ne'er again he'll cross the hall
 To cringe on servile knce,
 But oft, through battle's dusky smoke,
 His blood-red sword ye'll see ;

At merry feast he may not join,
 But through the war-clouds dun,
 O'er gasping chiefs and soldiers slain,
 He'll lead the carnage on.

IX.

The bravest hearts shall own with dread
 The fury of his wrath,
 And sights of woe alone shall mark
 The dread avenger's path ;
 With horror mute the wife shall gaze
 Upon her murder'd lord,
 While yet shall glow, though wet and dim,
 The unrelenting sword.

X.

On vengeance he will build his name,
 Till rocks aloud resound
 The glory of his valiant arms,
 And quakes the unconscious ground ;
 Till e'en the scorner, from his throne,
 Shall mark the kindling fire,
 And wish that he had never stirr'd
 That haughty soul's dark ire.

THE DEATH-BED OF AURUNGZEBE.

I.

THE clouds are lowering darkly down—
 Low on his couch a monarch lies ;
 The angry storm is rushing by—
 Shall ne'er again that monarch rise ?

II.

He lies upon his downy bed,
His vassals round him throng ;
Their cheering looks and words are vain,
And vain the power of song.

III.

Raise, raise the royal requiem loud,
Exalt the note of death ;
The gasping monarch covets now
The meanest peasant's breath !

IV.

'Neath tempest and the murky sky
The eagle-heart lies low ;
But why in death that withering gloom
Still mars his royal brow ?

V.

With troubled eye the monarch sees
A slow-proceeding hearse ;
And in the moaning blast he hears
An injured father's curse.

VI.

Why starts the sultán from his couch ?
Down, traitor ! tyrant, down !
O ! whither rolls that vacant eye ?
He sees the murder'd Dárá frown.

VII.

And whither wanders Soojá yet ?
 Are not his sufferings o'er ?
 He slumbers on a foreign strand,
 And troubles now no more,

VIII.

The princely Murád, where is he ?
 Gaze, monarch, gaze again !
 He moves not in the courtly hall,
 They miss him on the plain.

IX.

Was it a dream ? Why shudders thus
 The tyrant's sinking frame ?
 Brave Murád to the dungeon went,
 But thence he never came.

X.

In prison-cell who gnaws his chain ?
 A brother's darling heir ;
 Speak, Sheko,² speak ! Ah ! wherefore dumb ?
 No Sheko slumbers there !

XI.

Ungracious Sepehr,³ hear'st thou not ?
 Thy sov'reign calls thee near :
 That form is not of flesh and blood—
 Avaunt ! dread shape of fear.

Solimán Sheko, son of Dárá.

³ Another son of Dárá.

XII.

O God ! why in this hour the past
Should thus recounted be ?
Soothe, Lord ! the sinner's troubled heart,
And lure it back to Thce.

XIII.

The monarch on his death-bed lies,
Why heedless of his crown—
That bauble, which to grasp he brought
A hoary father down ?

XIV.

The palace-walls are deck'd with gems ;
Alas, he heeds them not !
His toils and troubles all are o'er,
Ambition, all forgot !

XV.

Where monuments record his fame
Strains not his aching eye ;
His glories, dwindling from his glance,
In chaos buried lie.

XVI.

Now darker dreams torment his soul,
And madness revels there ;
The victor-crown, the peacock-throne,
Have melted in the air !

XVII.

The mighty monarch—king of kings !⁴
 Is sinking to his grave ;
 But wherein is he greater now
 Than e'en his meanest slave ?

XVIII.

He shares a guiltier bed by far ;
 He leaves a fouler name ;
 And trembling to his Maker flies,—
 He flies in fear and shame.

XIX.

Around him servile courtiers prate
 To soothe his dying ears ;
 Abroad, throughcut his vast domains,
 A nation's curse he hears.

XX.

In agony he looks around,
 As if an angel-hand
 Upon the wall his fate had writ
 With burning marl or brand.

XXI.

He looks around, and sees alone
 The Great, Eternal Sire !
 Not beaming on him love and smiles,
 But girt with vengeful ire !

Allumgire, or sovereign of the world.

XXII.

Speechless in fear, he gazes still
 On Justice' awful throne !
 And there the prostrate sinner dreams,
 Great Mercy sits alone !

XXIII.

The clouds that hid the azure sky
 Have hurried with the blast ;
 And shuddering, trembling, hoping still,
 The sinner's soul hath past !

ADDRESS TO THE GANGES.

I.

The waves are dashing proudly down,
 Along thy sounding shore ;
 Lashing, with all the storm of power,
 The craggy base of mountain tower,
 Of mosque, and pagod hoar,
 That darkly o'er thy waters frown ;
 As if their moody spirits' sway
 Could hush thy wild and boist'rous play !

II.

But reckless yet of gloomy eye,
 As heedless too of smile,
 Through various climes, with regal sweep,
 Rolls on thy current dark and deep ;
 Nor ever stoops to wile
 The blooming fruits and flow'rets shy,

That lightly bend to reach thy wave,
Their beauteous breasts therein to lave.

III.

Unconscious roll the surges down,
But not unconscious thou,
Dread spirit of the roaring flood,
*For ages worshipp'd as a god,
And worshipp'd even now !
Worshipp'd, and not by serf or clown ;
For sages of the mightiest fame
Have paid their homage to thy name.

IV.

Canst thou forget the glorious past
When, mighty as a god,
With hands and heart unfetter'd yet,
And eys with slavish tears unwet,
Each sable warrior trod
Thy sacred shore ; before the blast
Of Moslem conquest hurried by ;
Ere yet the Mogul spear was nigh ?

V.

Thine was glory's brightest ray
When the land with glory teem'd ;
The fairest wreath the poet won,
The praise of every daring done,
On thee reflected beam'd :
When glory's light had pass'd away
Thine were India's wrongs and pain,
Despite that brow of proud disdain.

VI.

O'er crumbled thrones thy waters glide,
Through scenes of blood and woe;
And crown and kingdom, might and sway,
The victor's and the poet's bay,
 Ignobly sleep below.
Sole remnant of our ancient pride,
Thy waves survive the wreck of time,
And wanton free, as in their prime.

VII.

Behold, alas! all round how drear,
How mangled, and how torn!
Where are the damsels proud and gay,
Where warriors in their dread array,
 In freedom's temple born?
Can heroes sleep? Can patriots fear?
Or is the spark for ever gone
That lights the soul from sire to son?

VIII.

'Tis gone, ay, gone, for ever gone—
E'en like a midnight dream!
And with it, on the whirlwind blast,
Our fame and honour too have past,
 And glory's latest beam;
But thou unheeding roll'st alone,
Still proud of thy untarnish'd name,
As if untouched by India's shame.

IX.

I gaze upon thy current strong
Bencath the blaze of day;

What conjured visions throng my sight,
Of war and carnage, death and flight !

Thy waters to the Bay
In purple eddies sweep along,
And Freedom shrieking leaves her shrine,
Alas ! no longer now divine.

X.

'Twas here the savage Tártár stood,
And toss'd his brand and spear ;
The ripples of thy sacred stream
Reflected back his sabre's gleam,
While quaked with dastard fear
The children of a haughtier blood,
No longer now a haughty race,
Their own, their sirs', their land's disgrace.

XI.

The Suttee's slow but willing feet
Ascended here the pyre ;
Anxious for a happier lot,
Her fears, her tortures all forgot,
She clasp'd the kindling fire—
Expecting soon her lord to greet
In ether's emerald realms above,
Beneath the beams of light and love.

XII.

On yonder bank the mother stood,
Her baby on her breast !
A madd'ning horror thrill'd her frame,
Adown her cheeks the tear-drops came ;

Hush, baby, hush to rest !
Sleep, baby, sleep beneath the flood !
Her pleasing burthen sinking smiled ;
In vain the mother call'd her child.

XIII.

But why recount our woes and shame ?
Upon thy sacred shore
Be mine to dream of glories past,
To grieve those glories could not last,
And muse on days of yore !
For ever harp on former fame,
Remembering still those spirits brave
Who sleep beneath thy boist'rous wave.

XIV.

Roll, Gungá, roll in all thy pride,
Thy hallow'd groves among !
Glorious art thou in every mood,
Thou boast of India's widowhood,
Thou theme of every song !
Blent with the murmurs of thy tide
The records of far ages lie,
And live, for thou canst never die.

LAYS OF ANCIENT GREECE.

THE RAVINGS OF PROMETHEUS.

I.

I SEE thee in thy vastness, Jove !
I feel thee in thy power ;
The earth, it heaves and quakes beneath,
 The skies around me lower ;
I hear thy thunder's loud rebound,
I see the wreaths of lightning glare ;
But know'st thou not, O vengeful king !
How much the broken heart will dare ?

II.

The rock is riven by the blast ;
The hurricane sweeps the sea ; .
The sky confounded seeks to hide
 Beneath the grassy lea :
Th' unyielding spirit, pride begirt,
Albeit 'twill break, will never bend ;
Shiver the mountains from their base,
My heart, O sire ! you will not rend.

III.

Invent a flame more piercing still
Than lightning's fiery flash ;
Brandish a deadlier bolt to mock
The thunder's pounding crash ;
A louder din than whirlwinds raise :
Through all the elemental cry
Thou yet wilt hear my curses deep,
The ravings that can never die.

IV.

O'erpower my soul and body too ;
Command the eagle's beak
To lacerate my living frame,
My chains with blood to streak :
Defiance of thy fiendish power
Will yet assuage the gnawing pain ;
Crumble my form to ashes light,
Thou smit'st to crush my heart in vain.

V.

Still unsubdued and undismay'd,
I lift not hands to thee ;
Beyond endurance though my pain,
Enduréd it shall be :
Thy heart no yielding owns, I know,
And never glutted is thine ire ;
My heart no weakness can admit,
Above thy hate it doth aspire.

VI.

I ransom'd mortals from thy wiles,
For them thy power defied ;

Think'st thou for self I'll meanly bow,
 And my own act deride ?
 Hiss forth thy vengeance undisturb'd,
 Fire thou the artillery of hell ;
 Of fiends thou art the greatest fiend,
 And this to thee shall Prometheus tell.

VII.

Come, horrors come ! inwrap me round ;
 I care not where I go ;
 The earthquake and the hurricane
 Point to the abyss below :
 I feel the whirl that flings me down,
 I yield not yet the reverent knee ;
 O mother Earth, behold my wrongs !
 O Jove supreme, I spit at thee !

EVADNE.

I.

SAY, is he dead, the iron-arm'd,
 Struck by the fire of Jove ?
 And is the pyre that him consumes
 Now ready for my love ?
 Ah, why prolong a weary life ?
 Yon pyre can hold both man and wife.

II.

Capaneus, husband of my love !
 Behold, I come to thee !
 I cannot live from thee apart ;
 That were no life for me :

The rock is high ; one leap below,
The hungry flames will end my woe.

III.

Nay, father, nay, obstruct me not :
Farewell, old man, farewell !
The sweetest death I'll surely die ;
Let Argive maidens tell
To future days my husband's name,
And how I married him in flame.

THE LAMENT OF ANTIGONE.

I.

Alas ! for the house of Oedipus !
Alas ! for Laius' honour'd name !
How shall I raise the dire lament
For Thebes's prostrate fame ?
What god in heaven shall I invoke ?
What bird from pine-tree or the oak
Responsive to my tears will sing,
And comfort to this bosom bring ?

II.

O father ! blind, bedridden man !
To thee what tidings shall I tell ?
Thy sons no longer see the light ;
Upon each other's sword they fell !
With horror shuddering at the strife,
Between them rush'd thy mother-wife ;
Her breasts she bared ; they heeded not ;
Her own hand dealt the blow she sought.

III.

O Œdipus ! thy wretched age
 How shall it bear this heap of woe ?
 I rend the fillet from my hair,
 My tears for thee incessant flow !
 Jocasta led thy darken'd feet ;
 Now who will give thee help so meet ?
 Thy noble sons, they both are gone,
 And I am left to thee alone.

IV.

My mournful office to the dead,
 O father ! unperforméd lies,
 For Creon to Polynices' corse
 The rite of sepulture denies :
 But I have sworn his noble worth
 I'll cover yet with secret earth ;
 Now come, O father ! we must go,
 Exiléd from this land of woe.

THE VENGEANCE OF MEDEA.

I.

WHY is your brow so dark, Medea ?
 What grieves your woman's heart ?
 Is it that of man's deceit
 You knew not by your art ?
 O'er Jason's perjured truth
 Go immolate your ruth ;
 Despised your love for Glaucé's face,
 Call vengeance from the gods
 On Creon's house and race !

II.

The presents from a rival's hands,
O Glaucé, see how rare !
A fine-wrought robe, a wreath gold-twined,
To bind thy raven hair !
And Glaucé smiling puts them on ;
But, ah ! that smile was quickly gone,
By terror chased away :
“ I burn ! I burn ! ” she cries aloud ;
Her father, pressing through the crowd,
Infolds her in his arms ;
Beware Medea's awful charms !
O, hapless maid and hapless sire,
Ye both consume with mystic fire !

III.

What further fears are there in store ?
What mean Medea's groans ?
Like Ino, madden'd by the gods,
She kills her own two sons.
Hear'st not their cry, ill-fated one ?
How soft for life they plead ?
Her hand is firm, her stabs strike deep ;
Behold, the babies bleed !
Unhappy Jason comes too late,
And barréd is the Colchian's gate.

IV.

But see ! she passes through the air
By wingéd dragons drawn,
The bodies of her slaughter'd sons
Are on the chariot thrown.

“ Jason, thy love I now despise,
 The fruits at Juno’s shrine I’ll lay ;
 Then go to wed Pandion’s son ;
 Mourn thou for these, grow old and stay :
 Medea’s love you could forget,
 Her vengeance you’ll remember yet.”

THE DANCE OF THE MÆNADS.

I.

GREAT Pentheus, seated on the lofty pine,
 With horror saw, in Cithæron,
 Thy daughters, Cadmus, lead the frantic dance ;
 Their bosoms bare, their garments strown.

II.

What fire, O Bacchus ! riots in their veins !
 Where is their mátron modesty gone ?
 O Pentheus ! look not on thy mother’s shame !
 Agavé ! blush to see thy son !

III.

Excited Ino and Autonoë fair,
 O stop your lustful revelry !
 Possess’d of Bacchus and with frenzy fired
 Their eyes no mortal traitor see.

IV.

“ A spy o’erlooks us ! ” cry the Mænad throng,
 And leering gape upwards the tree,
 Where Pentheus, at their orgies quite aghast,
 Was musing in perplexity.

V.

“ Is it a lion or a boar we see ? ”
 Agavé speaketh to the band :
 “ Haste, sisters ! ” and from rock and cave they bound,
 And all around the pine-tree stand.

VI.

The tree they tear up from the solid earth ;
 What will not Bacchic frenzy do ?
 Like hungry dogs the madden’d women rave ;
 Agavé, mind, who speaks to you !

VII.

“ O, mother, help ! nor slay thy only son ;
 The anger of these fiends allay : ”
 She foams and raves, she looks with frenzied eyes ;
 Her son she seizes as a prey.

VIII.

The Mænads tear him limb by limb, and strow
 The several parts in Cithæron ;
 Agavé, joyous, bears the head away,
 “ Behold ! we’ve killed a young lion ! ”

IX.

O wretched woman ! by what fury fired
 Madly hast thou thy own son slain ?
 Just as his dogs the bold Actæon tore,
 That broke Autonoö’s heart in twain.

X.

Now see, where Bacchus comes with wrathful eyes !

“ Why shame ye thus,” he cries, “ my name ?
As Ceres with dry food your frames revives,
With nectar I your souls inflame.

XI.

“ List, wolves ! the liquid vigour of the grape
Gives respite from the sorest grief,
In soft oblivion lulls the care-worn soul,
To pain and sickness brings relief.

XII.

“ No medicine on earth has holier power :
But mortals, rest of reason’s light,
This glorious boon they first abuse,
Then, like Agavé, stand in fright !

XIII.

“ Their own dark deeds to gods they attribute :
For your foul crimes are we to blame ?
Agavé, fly ; assume a dragon’s form,
And in that form wring out your shame.”

THE STORY OF ALCESTIS.

I.

O WOMAN’S love ! Her own young life
Alcestis to Admetus gave,
When parents old refused to die,
And by their death their son to save !

II.

Alcestis, mindful of her husband's worth,
Gave up her life without a sigh,
While groan'd the king, and wopt their babes,
And not a servant's eye was dry.

III.

" O husband ! loved, reveréd, hear !
A willing death I die for thee ;
But take not to thy bridal bed
Another wife in place of me.

IV.

" I'll leave my children to thy care ;
For them no second mother bring ;
With them none ere can me replace ;
A step-dame hath a viper's sting.

V.

" No other boon I ask of thee ;
Be happy all the days you live ;
Let them be happy too, my love,
And then my spirit will not grieve.

VI.

" Farewell ! one look, one sigh, farewell ! ”
Admetus' wife is now no more ;
But who knocks at the palace-gate ?
The son of Jove is at the door.

VII.

Great Hercules admittance craves ;
 A guest must ne'er be sent away ;
 Well-housed, he learnt the cause of woe
 And hasten'd where the warm corse lay.

VIII.

“ List, Pluto, list ! that corse is mine ;
 Give back the life you’ve ta’en away ;
 I seize thee else :” great Pluto starts ;
 He gives Alcestis back to day !

IX.

A shrouded woman’s to Admetus brought—
 “ I’ve won this prize, O king ! for thee ;
 Receive her to thy house and heart,
 And let her like Alcestis be.”

X.

O ! joyous was Admetus’ heart
 That precious present to retain :
 Beyond the hopes of mortal man
 He saw his own revived again.

HERCULES FURENS.

I.

“ DIE, murderous dog ! ” and Lycus lies,
 Bereft of life, in his own palace-hall,
 And Thebes and Megara are both avenged !
 But why distraught thy scowling eyes ?

Why do thy breathings so heavily fall ?
Why is thy face, O Hercules ! so changed ?

II.

Woe, woe, for Thebes ! 'Tis Juno's wrath
That Madness sends to Alcmena's son,
Now raving for Eurystheus still unslain.

O Megara ! avoid his path ;
Speed forth, ye children, from the house and run :
He hunter-like pursues ; your flight is vain !

III.

" 'Twas I the dog of Lerna slew,
The Nemean lion, the Erymanthean boar,
And in their mountain-homes the centaurs free ;

And shall my avenging hands spare you,
Eurystheus' brood ? No, with your gore
You must repay his bitter hate for me."

IV.

Hold, madman ! 'tis thy own blood flows,
And not Eurystheus' brood you murder so ;
Thy own sweet children cling in fear for life !

They cling in vain ! His frenzied blows
The suppliants strike ; first fall the elder two,
And then the youngest and his own loved wife.

V.

With horror mute Amphitryon stands
Deep-rooted, for his feet refuse to fly,
While like a frightened horse his son comes round :
Minerva sees, and in her hands
A rock upheaves, which tearing through the sky
The madman strikes, and pins him to the ground.

VI.

Supine the vanquish'd hero lies !
O goddess dread ! his murd'rous raving stay,
From Juno's dreadful ire one victim save !

The prayer is heard ; his weary eyes
In sleep are closed, and Madness chased away
To utter darkness flies, from breast so brave.

THE DEATH OF HIPPOLYTUS.

I.

LIFT me ! O lift me ! for the pains rush through
In spasms through my brain ;
Dash'd by my horses on the rock,
My bones are shatter'd by the shock ;
Behold me by a father's curses slain !

II.

Guiltless I suffer from a woman's hate,
Crush'd by a loathsome lie ;
'Tis known to all the powers above
I ne'er return'd Phædra's love,
Yet Jove permits me wretched thus to die.

III.

O curse unhappy ! O sire deceived !
Behold the tears I weep !
I cannot bear this racking pain,
In kindness pierce me through the brain,
Great Pluto, lull me to eternal sleep !

IV.

A breath of perfume comes to cheer my soul !
 What goddess here I see !
Diana, of the silver bow,
Behold thy hunter laid thus low,
Return my father's tender love to me !

V.

Groan, father, groan ! thy son's short life is o'er :
 Too late thou know'st the truth !
Now clasp me to thy heart again,
Within thine arms assuage my pain ;
See, darkness comes to quench the eyes of youth !

VI.

O realms of Athens and of Pallas wise !
 From ye for e'er I go ;
My strength is past, my pangs are o'er ;
 For me, O father ! grieve no more ;
I leave for blissful vales this land of woe.

ION AND CREUSA.

I.

“ O thou, that flood'st the world with light !
 Apollo, of the seven-string'd lyre !
Why hast thou crush'd with bitter hate
 The victim of thy own desire ?

II.

“ A virgin, by the limpid lake,
 You saw me gathering crocus-bells,
You dragg'd me to the darksome cave,—
 The secrets of that cave who tells ?

III.

“ I wretched bore to thee a boy,
 But, fearing evil name to brave,
 In swaddling-clothes the child exposed,
 Trusting his father him would save.

IV.

“ But, cruel god, your hapless son
 You suffer’d hungry birds to tear ;
 Hast thou the heart to sing and play
 While I my load of sorrows bear ?

V.

“ In wedlock’s bonds no child I’ve borne,
 My husband gets a son from thee ;
 My hopes are gone, my heart is broke :
 Thou couldst not give my child to me.

VI.

“ O god, that shared my virgin shame !
 Now pierce me with thy fiery dart ;
 In my own house another’s child
 To rear and feed will break my heart.”

VII.

Thus Creusa mourn’d before the shrine
 Of great Apollo, son of Jove !
 While Ion from the priestess’ hands received
 The clothes that mark’d a mother’s love.

VIII.

“ These swaddling-clothes receive, my boy,
For safe inwrapp’d in them you lay,
When to these hallow’d precincts brought,
A poor, forsaken, cast-away.

IX.

“ By these seek out thy mother now,
If haply she survives her shame :”
“ She does,” Creusa cries aloud ;
“ Salute me by that mother’s name.

X.

“ Apollo, father of my son !
I bless thee that thou blessest me ;
This, this repays the cruel turn
That I received afore of thee.”

XI.

Impatient Crcusa folds her son
In one prolongéd, fond embrace ;
The tears gush forth from both their eyes,
Press’d heart to heart and face to face.

XII.

And smiles old Xuthus that the child,
Apollo’s gift, his wife loves well :
What man can fathom woman’s heart ?
Thy joy, O Creusa, who can tell ?

IPHIGENIA IN AULIS.

I.

“ ALAS for me ! O sire unkind !
 How shall I move thy heart of stone ?
 Had I Orpheus’ voice of fire
 Thou might’st have listen’d to my moan.

II.

“ Persuasion’s voice thou heedest not ;
 What have I then but tears to show ?
 Unapt in words, my wail receive ;
 O father, see me suppliant bow.

III.

“ Take not from me the life you gave ;
 ’Tis sweet, O king ! to see the light !
 O send me not so unprepared,
 So early, to the realms of night !

IV.

“ Remember, sire, I was the first
 To hail thee by a father’s name ;
 That oft, with kisses on my lips,
 Thou’st prest me to repeat the claim.

V.

“ Dandling thy child, thou oft hast said
 A worthy mate thou wouldest give to me ;
 I never dreamt that thou didst mean
 That Pluto should that husband be.

VI.

“ What have I done to lose thy love ?
Why should my life for Helen’s pay ?
If angry gods a victim want
Why not thy hands on Hermione lay ?

VII.

“ The Grecian ships off Chalcis lie ;
The gods deny a favouring gale ;
Let Menelaus the victim find
That fain must help the chiefs to sail.

VIII.

“ Plead, mother, plead ! cry, brother, cry !
He lists not to my plaint of woe :
Ulysses comes to tear me hence ;
With that fell man let me not go.

IX.

“ Achilles self hath sued in vain,
My father holds his purpose stern ;
Who then shall help me in my need ?
To whom shall I for mercy turn ?

X.

“ Diana ! listen to my prayer ;
Before my time I’m loath to go ;
My heart appalléd backward shrinks
From horrors of the realms below.

XI.

“ Raise, maidens, raise the pæan aloft !
 The gods may grant what men deny :
 Hear, goddess ! for my tender years ;
 List, virgin queen, a virgin’s cry ! ”

XII.

The cry was heard, the virgin saved ;
 A roaming stag did her replace ;
 The Greek ships proudly onward pass’d—
 But of the girl they found no trace.

IPHIGENIA IN TAURIS.

I.

THE priestess arose from her sleep disturb’d,
 For strange was the vision she saw ;
 She thought she had wander’d to Argos again,
 And stood in its palace with awe.

II.

And the earth beneath her shook violently,
 And she ran in fear from the gate,
 When the roof of the building fell inwards below,
 And nothing was left of its state.

III.

No, nothing was left, but one pillar alone,
 That seem’d to stream with golden hair ;
 When the scene was changed to the Scythian land,
 And a victim awaited her there.

IV.

A victim sure before the temple stands,
And yellow are the locks that flow ;
A Greek cast on that inhospitable shore :
A Greek ! Why starts the priestess so ?

V.

“ O Greek ! thy forfeit life I'll give to thee,
If thou wilt news of Argos say,—
How fairs Agamemnon, Atreus' son ?
And how his queen, Clytemnestra gay ? ”

VI.

“ Cease, woman, cease ! thy bloody knife prepare :
I do not ask my life of thee ;
But put not questions which my vitals tear ;
Erinnys yet remembers me ! ”

VII.

“ What then art thou to Agamemnon ? say ;
My heart misgives, I fain would know :
Hast thou e'er heard the prince Orestes' name ?
To me, O Greek ! some pity show.”

VIII.

“ Why wilt thou ask what does not thee concern ?
The king was by his own wife slain ;
That wife before Orestes' dagger fell :
For peace Orestes seeks in vain ! ”

IX.

“ O horrid doom ! then where’s Orestes now ?
 Canst thou to him my tale relate ?
 Say, that his sister, Iphigenia, lives,
 By Dian rescued from her fate ! ”

X.

“ Lives she ! ah, where ? say, priestess, I beseech ;
 In me the wretch Orestes see !
 Do I in thee Iphigenia find ?
 Wilt thou a sister be to me ? ”

XI.

“ O dearest brother ! take me to thy arms,
 Let us two mix our groans and tears,
 And I from Erinnys will rescue thee,
 Or Dian’s self will chase thy fears.”

XII.

A greater, see, from heaven descends, Pallas !
 Before whose glance the Furies quake :
 “ Orestes, with Iphigenia hie away,
 And with ye Dian’s image take.

XIII.

“ Near heaven-built Athens build her there a shrine,
 Upon the rock call’d Aloë ;
 Your trials then shall cease, no Furies more
 In frenzied fits you e’er will see.”

THE DREAM OF HECUBA.

I.

“ Why do my limbs so quiver ?
Why beats my heart with fear ?
I saw a dreadful vision
Before the morn was near ;
By a ravenous wolf, I dreamt,
A dappled deer was torn ;
And by a spectre to his tomb
A living maid was borne.
O dames of Troy ! what further ills
To me this awful dream reveals ?

II.

“ Who shall my fears now interpret ?
Where’s Helenus, my seer ?
And where’s my poor Cassandra gone,
Who knew my heart to cheer ?
Avert, O Jove ! the fates I see,
For I am now forlorn ;
My offspring gone, the old man dead,
My heart is rack’d and torn :
The light of life is quench’d in me ;
O send not further misery ! ”

III.

Alas ! alas ! decrepid queen,
Not yet thy trials cease ;
A victim for his cheerless tomb
Achilles asks of Greece :

And lo ! the chiefs decide to tear
 Polyxena from thy side,
 And lead her living to the pyre,
 A spectre's virgin bride !
 Who wrests her from thy clasp so close ?
 Ulysses, fellest of the Trojans' foes !

IV.

And is there more, ye gods, for her ?
 More evils to endure ?
 Upon the wave-wash'd sand thereto lies
 The corse of Polydore !
 Thy dappled fawn, thy youngest boy,
 Torn by the wolf of Thrace,
 Behold ! O luckless, childless queen,
 Behold his welt'ring face !
 Thy dream is read ! Arise once more !
 Avenge the death of Polydore !

THE TROJANS' CURSE.

I.

RAISE, raise the wail for Ilium lost !
 By craft at last laid low ;
 Ulysses, with his hidden spears,
 Has dealt the fatal blow.

II.

In vain Achilles fought and slew,
 In vain brave Ajax bled ;
 The Argive spear, the Trojan sword,
 They raised but heaps of dead.

III.

Laertes' son, in crooked wiles
By artful Pallas taught,
At last before the open gates
The wooden fabric brought;

IV.

A horse, with golden trappings dress'd,
Which secret arms enwomb'd;
The treacherous bait we heedless drew
Within the city doom'd.

V.

Fraught with the slaughter of our race
By Pallas' shrine it stood;
And when the gloom of midnight came
What deeds were done of blood!

VI.

O grief to Phrygians, serf and lord,
How bright the fires arose!
And how in sleep were warriors slain
By fierce, relentless foes!

VII.

O wicked monster, lawless man!
Thy fiendish plot sped well;
But dying curse of Trojans slain
Will haunt thy soul in hell!

VIII.

Thou know'st not now what ills await
 For thee on sea and shore ;
 For ten more years thou yet must toil
 Before thy griefs be o'er.

IX.

Alone must cross Charybdis' strait,
 The savage Cyclops brave,
 A refuge find in Circe's isle
 When shipwreck'd on the wave.

X.

In living form thou must descend
 To Pluto's dismal shore ;
 Then meet an angry, traitor band
 At thy own palace-door.

XI.

Such are the ills the gods reserve,
 O, impious man, for thee !
 And if thou findest rest at last,
 Not long that rest shall be.

XII.

For bloody man a bloody death ;
 Such is the fearful doom !
 A son will speed the forceful spear
 That shrouds thy soul in gloom.

THE TEARS OF ANDROMACHE.

I.

“ THEY tell me 'tis my wedding day ;
The crowning woe is come !
Achilles' son to be my mate,
And love to feign wherc I must hate,
Such is the captive's doom !

II.

“ And I to him must lonely go,
Leaving my son behind—
Astyanax, his father's pride,
Who ne'er has left his mother's side,—
Much, much misgives my mind !

III.

“ What heartless fiend this scheme devised ?
Perdition be his fate !
The cowards fear that, manly grown,
My son may fight for Troy o'erthrown ;
What ills for him await ?

IV.

“ In vain thou cling'st so fast to me,
Sweet burden of my arms !
I cannot save thy infant life,
No force to shield hath Hector's wife
From all their threaten'd harms.

V.

“ O dearly prized ! thy hapless doom
I fain desire to know ;

Their vengeful hate unsated still,
 The darkest fears my bosom fill ;
 What god will ward the blow ?

VI.

“ Speak, Talthybius, tell me what
 The assembled Greeks decree :
 Behold his likeness to his sire ;
 O ! will they grant my fond desire
 And spare the boy to me ? ”

VII.

“ No, lady, no ! his father’s worth
 The Greeks remember well ;
 Ulysses’ voice his life demands,
 And with him shout the Grecian bands ;
 The news I loathed to tell.”

VIII.

“ A child like this do warriors fear ?
 Alas, my fair-hair’d boy !
 Even Hector’s name’s a curse to thee,
 O ! who will hearken then to me
 And save a widow’s joy ? ”

IX.

“ What wounds will smite thy tender limbs ?
 What blow release thy breath ?
 Thy body nurtured so with care,
 Since evil men refuse to spare,
 Soft be the clasp of death ! ”

X.

“ Now lead me to my captor’s ship,
And hide me in its hold ;
A pleasant wedding this for me :
May brides of Greece as happy be
For ages yet untold ! ”

CASSANDRA.

I.

IMPETUOUS burst my wailings deep,
The dreadful strains of prophecy !
Upon my brain what terrors crowd !
What unfeign’d fear possesses me !
Apollo, great destroyer mine,
O why must I such things divine ?

II.

By his own cow a stately bull,
Unfairly caught, is gored to death ;
A biped lioness with fiendish bite
Her lion strong deprives of breath,
By tiger help’d with her that lay
What time the lion was away.

III.

O fiend of hell in woman’s form !
Canst thou such fearful actions dare ?
I see her feign an angel’s love,
I see her whet her dagger bare ;
By three deep blows I see him slain,
But O ! I speak my fears in vain.

IV.

Accurséd Scylla of the Atreus' race !
 I see the blood-clot on thy brow !
 A doom as fierce is left for thee,
 A son will lay thy carcass low !
 For me I care not now to die,
 I only fear the horrors nigh.

V.

The palace reeks with royal gore,
 The master of the house is gone ;
 O ! who will order things aright ?
 O ! where is now the master's son ?
 Come quick as light, Orestes, come ; .
 A power divine will guide thee home !

VI.

O king of Greece ! I grieve for thee ;
 Troy's daughter mourns her captor slain ;
 An impious death has been thy meed,
 Thou shouldst have died on Phrygian plain ;
 A woman foul has laid thee low,
 And none to grieve the traitor blow !

VII.

Orestes, speed on wings of fire ;
 Avenger of the mighty dead !
 Whet vengeance on thy father's corse,
 And swear it on his life-blood red :
 A dreadful task, O son ! is thine,
 Avenger of the Atreus' line !

THE FEARS OF ORESTES.

I.

THE fit has left me ! O balmy sleep !
Thou givest a respite which the gods deny !
When furies hound me in their rage
In vain unto the gods I cry.

II.

Voracious virgins ! wherefore me,
Horrid and fierce, ye madden day by day ?
What have I done ? A mother kill'd ?
That mother did my father slay !

III.

Unholy mother and unholy wife,
Infamous her name throughout all Greece,
Was it a crime to shed her blood
Who kill'd her husband with a kiss ?

IV.

Ye gods ! how awful is your wrath !
Jove hath no pity ; Apollo heedeth not !
My mother rolls her hideous eyes !
O can my crime be ne'er forgot ?

V.

Whither, O ! whither shall I fly ?
O Pylades, my friend ! direct my way ;
The snake-crown'd sisters leap around ;
No rest they give me night or day. .

VI.

Strike me with thunder, O ye gods !
Almighty Jove, the matricide lay low !
Calmly I'll meet thy fiery bolt,
But bid these frenzied demons go.

VII.

Ye heed me not ! With glaring eyes
The fiends approach me as I stand alone ;
Hide, Electra, hide me in thine arms,
Or see thy brother turn'd to stone.

VIII.

But soft, the Loxian prophet comes !
The gods are just ! my mother's rage is o'er ;
Latona's son brings rest and peace ;
Almighty Jove, I ask no more !

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

HYMN TO THE DEITY.

I.

O THOU ! of this great universe the Lord,
Whatever be Thy name !
Whose throne is far above the mountain's brow,
Whither may never pierce our mortal sight,
In mystic gloom, or radiant blaze of light,
Lord of these works ! but far transcendent Thou !

II.

From pole to pole, and from the earth to heaven,
In all the spheres that burn,
Thy name is glorious, as it e'er should be ;
For all creation at Thy will was made,
The giant mountain, and the wild cascade,
And the hoarse billows of the roaring sea.

III.

And every place Thy hallow'd presence owns,
Spirit of Purity !

Where Winter's chilly blasts perpetual reign,
And on the barren shores no verdure smiles;
The Polar sea, and Zembla's frozen isles,
As well as Summer's fertile, wide domain.

IV.

Through boundless space the stars harmonious roll,
Each sparkling gem a world !
A world, or atom basking in Thy beam,
A fragment of Thy mystic, vast design,
Whose limits human pride may ne'er confine :
Lord of all Goodness ! Thou art all Supreme !

STANZAS.

I.

I HAD a bird—a joyous bird,
Of gaudy hue and gilded wing,
And O ! I loved full well to hear
That little warbler sing :
No haunted place, though dark and drear,
Could damp its soul with sadness ;
From every bough, in every hour,
Alike it sang of gladness.
But once, upon rejoicing wings,
It wander'd far a-main ;
Pursued its flight o'er ocean's breast,
And ne'er return'd again.

II.

I had a tree—a fragrant shrub
That bloom'd beneath the sky,

Fann'd by each soft and cooling breeze
 With love that pass'd it by :
 Its fresh leaves, fringed with morning dew,
 Could waken with a spell
 Each sunlit joy departed long,
 And O, remember'd well !
 But darkness came, the winds arose,
 And, in their reckless play,
 They wrench'd my sapling from the earth,—
 'Twas wafted far away !

III.

I had a gem,—with brighter light
 The stars of heaven ne'er shone ;
 And never from earth's deep recess
 A purer thing was won.
 But once, while musing by the stream,
 I dropt it in the wave ;
 The heedless torrent murmur'd on—
 No jewel back it gave :
 I wept, and watch'd the sweeping flood ;
 I track'd it to the main ;
 Each ripplet mark'd with straining eyes ;
 But wept, and watch'd in vain.

IV.

'Tis ever thus—the loved depart,
 We know not whither borne ;
 And what we prize the dearest—best,
 We've always first to mourn :
 On to some distant land it speeds,
 On to some better shore—

Like eager bird on joyous wings,
It flies to come no more :
Or like the shrub by tempests rent,
Or gem drown'd 'neath the deep—
'Tis ever thus—it parts for aye—
In vain we mourn and weep.

WOMAN.

I.

To that confiding, trusting soul,
O ! be thou ne'er unkind ;
A purer gem than woman's love
On earth thou wilt not find :
Through every dreary stage of life
That feeling fond will twine
A cestus round the lonely heart,
Of something so divine !
When tending in life's morning hour,
It consecrates the air
With many a soothing lullaby,
And many a hallow'd prayer ;
Unflinchingly, through blight and storm,
Protects the happy child,
And wiles away its infant cares
With kisses soft and mild.
What resting-place so sweet and calm
As is a mother's breast ?
What downy couch, what bed of flowers,
Can give such quiet rest ?

II.

And when along life's rugged steep
A loftier course we run,
When youth and health are both our own,
And all beneath the sun
With radiant lustre seem to burn,
The loveliest vision yet
Is woman with her starry eyes
And flowing locks of jet :
'Tis woman's smile that on our path
Flings forth the sweetest charm,
And on this cold and dreary world
That keeps the bosom warm ;
Her wistful eye, her artless look,
Prolongs the sunny gleam ;
We own the spell, and while she smiles,
It is not all a dream !
Nor matters much if after all
A transient dream it be ;
Not on this sterile, dismal earth
Such visions oft we see.

III.

When youth, when hopes, when friends have past
Who pours the healing balm,
And to the thirsty soul unscafs
Life's sweetest, holiest calm ?
The aching head who pillows still
Upon her beating breast ?
And who reclaims the sinner back,
And lulls his soul to rest ?
When sickness rules the tedious hours,
Who waits the peevish will ?

A mother, sister, child, or wife,
 But lovely woman still !
 There's not on earth, and O ! perhaps,
 Not in the stars above,
 Such steadfast feeling, fond and true,
 As woman's sacred love :
 Then do not thou her troth deceive ;
 Her heart it knows no change :
 O ! wherefore, like the giddy bee,
 Shouldst thou for ever range ?

THE WIDOW.

I.

SHE knelt beside the running stream,
 Her dark eyes raised above ;
 And there in bitter mood she wept,
 With agony of love ;
 Her earthly joys and wishes gone,
 She lowly knelt, and pray'd alone.

II.

Up to the dark'ning sky she gazed
 The night was closing round ;
 Her hands were folded on her breast,
 Her knees upon the ground :
 With pity struck, the evening star
 On her its radiance flung from far.

III.

They call'd the weary-hearted back
 Return ! return ! they said :

She gazed upon the roaring flood,
 She gazed upon the dead :
 Her only wish upon his breast,
 Beneath that troubled flood to rest.

IV.

The evening wind blew cold and chill
 Along the starlit sky,
 And still she mourn'd—she mourn'd alone—
 The torrent murmur'd by ;
 And with its dirge-like, boding moans,
 Her stricken bosom blent its groans.

V.

“ My soaring hopes and prospects vain
 Are all alike laid low,
 Thy angry wrath, Almighty Lord !
 Has scathed this haughty brow ;
 I bend—I bend beneath Thy rod,
 O help this weary spirit, God !

VI.

“ Hence, hence, I care not whither borne,
 O ! waft my soul to Thee ;
 Father of Mercies ! deign to hear
 One only prayer from me :
 Bid me not pine in fetters here,
 My prison-house is cold and drear.”

VII.

But lo ! behold, of sunny brow
 A pretty child they bring,

A pretty child with laughing eyes—
A little, joyous thing !

Above there shone the evening star,
But O ! that child was lovelier far.

VIII.

One moment—and her woman's heart
The potent charm confest ;
Her child—her only treasure now—
She clasp'd upon her breast ;
Then raised her swollen eyes above,
With all a widow'd mother's love.

IX.

“ Father ! forgive the first dark wish ;
Not yet, not yet I part ;
The well of feeling still lies deep
Within this wounded heart :
O ! spare Thy gift—this love-pledge fair,
That binds me to this world of care.”

WHAT WILT THOU WORSHIP, O MY SOUL ?

I.

WHAT wilt thou worship, O my soul ?
Look on the world around ;
With wonders fraught the oceans roll,
And smile the hills with wonder crown'd !
But wilt thou to the raging main,
Or to the hill, or to the plain,
Thy votive homage pay ?
A mightier power there reigns supreme ;
O turn, my soul, O turn to Him
Whom waves and hills obey !

II.

How vast, stupendous is His might
 Let burning thunders tell,
 And the lightning's livid light
 When bursting o'er the dell !
 O'er the wide sea the wild tornado raves,
 Lashing to foam the angry waves
 And heaving mountains to the sky ;
 But back unto the ocean's breast
 Those self-same waves retreat to rest
 When done His purpose high !

III.

Darkness and light to Him belong,
 He bids the sun arise,
 At His command the bright stars through
 To light the murky skies ;
 And when He draws the pall again
 'Tis darkness over land and main,
 And wild, primeval night,
 Nor may one transient beam illume
 The deepness of that dreary gloom
 Until He calls for light !

IV.

Through desert sands, o'er frozen sod,
 The heathen plods his rayless way,
 In distant lands to seek for God,
 O'er the sainted Himalay.
 But thou, my soul, thy God is nigh
 In peril's darkest hour ;
 No cavern dark, no mountain high,
 Can veil His awful power :

Then turn, my soul, O turn to Him,
 'The Lord of lords, that God supreme
 Whom heaven and earth obey !

NEW-YEAR'S-NIGHT WISHES.

(After Jean Paul Richter.)

I.

THE new year opes its portals wide ;
 A spirit stands the pathway by,
 Gazing upon the glowing sky
 That speaks the coming sun :
 That spirit proud is Destiny ;
 Natalie, go unto her side,
 And make thy warmest wishes known.

II.

What wantest thou ? Wouldst thou have Joy ?
 Ah, no ! Natalie's bleeding heart
 Hath felt too oft the rosy dream
 Of pleasure melting with a smart :
 Joy is the murdering dagger's gleam,
 The sunlight that precedes the gloom
 Of tempests wild, the rankling thorn
 That aye survives the flow'ret's bloom,
 Short-lived and quick outworn ;
 Natalie asketh not for Joy.

III.

Then ask for Love : Natalie, say,
 Pray'st thou with Love the livelong day

Thy life to be inwove ?
 Ah, no ! not Love, good spirit, nay,
 I do not seek that radiant boon,
 For I its sweets and griefs have known :
 Natalie loved, the days are gone,
 The loved one to her rest is laid,
 And now Natalie stands alone
 Beneath the myrtle's upas shade ;
 Natalie seeks not Love.

IV.

Wouldst thou have Friendship, Natalie ?
 Ah, no ! not that on hollow earth,—
 For here the bond is never true :
 Friendship on earth is but a name ;
 Though strong at times its cords may seem,
 Too oft, alas ! 'tis nothing worth,—
 The transient mockery of a dream,
 That sets the heart and brain on flame,—
 A something bright of golden hue,
 Dull ashes soon to be !

V.

Then speak thy wish, and boldly say
 For what thou prayest, Natalie ?
 The morning sun comes swift apace,
 I cannot tarry here for thee.
 Ah ! give me *Patience*, Destiny ;
 Patience to run the weary race,
 Patience to live and then to die,
 To bear in peace the ills of life,
 And buffet calmly in the strife,

And raise my eyes the while to Heaven :
Be this unto Natalie given !

THE SINNER'S PRAYER.

I.

THE sinner comes with contrite heart,
O Lord ! vouchsafe to hear ;
Let Mercy, Love, and Goodness deign
To hail the sinner's tear.

II.

By conscience pierced with venom'd wrath,
In grief, and in dismay,
A wretch forlorn he turns to Theo,
Thou sinners' only stay !

III.

Thy mighty power, it will not smite
The heart that dares repent ;
With fervent hope he turns to Thce,
Relent, O Lord, relent !

IV.

He kneels a suppliant at Thy throne,
And seeks Thy grace, O King !
That he reclaim'd to virtue's path
His wand'ring steps may bring.

V.

Tempestuous storms around him lour,
And wild the surges roll ;
O ! who but Thou those blasts can curb,
Those furious waves control ?

VI.

He asks not for life's pomp and power,
He sues not for life's fame,
He covets not the miser's pelf,
He covets not a name.

VII.

For peace on earth, and bliss in heaven,
From sin exemption free,—
For these he kneels, for these he prays,
He humbly prays to Thee.

VIII.

And should to suffer be his lot,
He asks a patient mind ;
Let friends deceive, let foes annoy,
But be not Thou unkind.

IX.

And if Thou deign'st to send him bliss—
What bliss on earth may be—
O ! teach him how to use that gift
From pride and passion free.

X.

Whatever be Thy hid intents,
His only prayer shall be
For contrite heart, and spirit pure,
Love, hope, and trust in Thee.

XI.

Through life's inconstant, devious scenes—
 Hills, valleys, shade, and sun,
 Be Thine to guide the sinner's way,
 And let Thy will be done !

HAPPINESS.

I.

UNNUMBER'D votaries raise thy song ;
 To worship thee what myriads throng ;
 What heart but pants and works with guile,
 Embarks its all to win thy smile,
 Braves every adverse current's might
 To bask one moment in thy light ;
 And yet how few their end obtain,
 For all their trouble, all their pain.
 False meteors, with their fickle ray,
 Mislead our eager hearts away ;
 And, still perverse, on error tost,
 We ne'er observe our pathway lost.

II.

Some seek for bliss in wealth and power ;
 Above the rest their wishes tower,
 At humble peace they look with scorn,
 And feel themselves for greatness born,
 With visions high, in manhood's prime,
 Renown's rough hill essay to climb,
 Refuse to limbs their needful rest,
 And buffet on with haughty breast ;

Unhappy still, but hoping yet
Some future day the prize to get,—
For ever thus their nerves they strain,
And toil and hope, but hope in vain.

III.

Others again, of thoughtful mind,
In nought but learning pleasure find ;
On ancient books intent they pore,
And search for bliss in ancient lore,
In vigils pass each midnight hour,
Alone within their lonely bower,
Till aching brain, and furrow'd brow,
Their dreariness of heart avow,
And hope deferr'd to sickness grown,
Beholds no more the chymic stone ;
Yet still they seek, with toil and pain,
What men in books may never gain.

IV.

And some, more foolish than the rest,
Essay in riot to be blest,
With wine and women lead the race ;
But eyes bedimm'd and pallid face
Are all the guerdon of their toil.
Some with heroic ardour boil ;
Anxious to get a warrior's name
They strive to win their bliss in fame ;
But find that fame an empty breath,
The laurel but a wither'd wreath ;
And yet they try their might again,
To lengthen out their toils and pain.

V.

But is there then no blessing here,
 No joy to wipe the orphan's tear,
 To ease the weariness of life,
 To heal the wounds of fruitless strife ?
 Does every path to error lead ?
 Is sorrow man's inevitable meed ?
 Ah, no ! while passions lead the way,
 In folly's maze man moves astray ;
 But he who turns his eyes above,
 With steadfast trust, and holy love,
 On God relying hopes to gain
 His bliss through faith, ne'er hopes in vain.

VOICE FROM AN INFANT'S TOMB.

I.

PASS, mourner, pass ; and do not stay
 To steep my bed with tears ;
 I would not be the thing thou art,
 To tread thy vale of fears.

II.

“The poor heart sleeps !” Ah, wherefore poor ?
 I’m happier far than thee ;
 My world’s a world of love and joy ;
 Do thou not weep for me.

III.

“The pale flower, nipt by frosty rime,
 Hath vanish’d far away !”
 ’Tis thus they mourn’d ; they mourn me still
 The livelong night and day.

IV.

“The dew-drop, dried in early morn,
Was miss'd upon the flower—
Was miss'd in earth, when it was gone
To grace a brighter bower.”

V.

Alas ! they know not where I am,
Nor what my bliss may be ;
Else they had never wept so long :
They had not wept for me.

VI.

I've heard strange tales of worldly bliss,
Of manhood's wild career ;
But broken heart, and searéd brain,
Are all the trophies dear.

VII.

And flitting hopes, and hollow dreams,
Fond mourner, they are thine ;
But all thy visions ne'er can paint
The pleasures that are mine.

VIII.

The rainbow for a moment gleams
And fills thy heart with glee ;
But brighter bows perpetual shine
With sweeter charms for me.

IX.

Thy false light gone, the murky clouds
 Again thy skies deform ;
 But clouds ne'er lower upon my path,
 Nor blows the chilly storm.

X.

Alike to me the purple morn,
 Alike the noonday sky ;
 I have no joys that bloom to fade—
 To wither, droop, and die.

XI.

No bird in all that earth of thine,
 That floats on joyous wing,
 Is half so free, or half so well
 Can its light carols sing.

-XII.

Then, wherefore weep for me, my friend ?
 I would not wish to be
 The happiest man that moves on earth :
 I'm happier far than thee !

THE ORPHAN'S GUARDIAN.

(After the *Guardian Genius* of Alphonse de Lamartine.)

I.

A LONELY wanderer 'neath the pensivo shades,
 Oft have I sobb'd my childhood's hours away
 No prying eyes to watch my burning tears,
 No footsteps fond to trace the orphan's play ;
 When she, life's sweetest friend, from earth was gone,
 And I was left to brave the blast alone !

II.

I turn'd to weep while others round me smiled,
For on my cheeks no kiss was ever seal'd ;
I sought the woods, and there I mused on joys
In dreams remember'd and in dreams reveal'd :
And O ! I felt a light hand wipe my tears,
And lips that kissing, kiss'd away my fears !

III.

In youth, I sought the covert shades again,
And still my heart was big with griefs and fears ;
I had no friend, none smiled my joy to see,
But some there were who smiled to see my tears :
An orphan's life how cheerless, and how lone !
I moved and lived, but felt my joys were flown.

IV.

I saw her still, for love can never die ;
Despite each storm I kept her still in sight ;
Implored her aid—from heaven she seem'd to smile,
It was no dream—I mark'd that ray of light !
I felt thus early by the world forsook ;
And yet my heart could smile beneath her look !

V.

In manhood's prime, too, I have lonely stray'd
O'er dreary wilds, to human feet unknown ;
When wither'd, broken, sear'd with early blight,
My earth-bound hopes and joys alike were gone ;
While words severe, repeated o'er and o'er,
Had pierced my bleeding bosom to the core.

VI.

Despite each grief, despite each cross and care,
 I ne'er forgot to raise mine eyes to heaven ;
 I turn'd to God, for He alone, I knew,
 Could heal the wounds by friends unkindly given :
 And then she came—fond dreamer, 'twas a cloud !
 O no ; she spake to me—she spake aloud !

VII.

And now old age is creeping in my veins ;
 My heart grown callous long hath ceased to feel ;
 Nor shrinketh now, as once 'twas wont to shrink,
 From foeman's dart, or friendship's poison'd steel ;
 And life's last lingering hours are well-nigh o'er,
 In peace I'm hastening to my haven shore.

VIII.

I never trusted to the proud man's aid ;
 Alone, as on the wide world I was cast,
 I steer'd my bark, by tempests drear assail'd,
 And, still alone, those tempests I have pass'd :
 Alone ? No, thou wert there, art present now,
 My mother ! O my guardian angel thou !

IX.

I see thee still ; it is no phantasy :
 I feel that thou art ever at my side ;
 That whisp'ring voice, that viewless touch refined,
 I know that they are thine, my angel guide !
 And, while o'er flowery paths I follow thee,
 Some transient gleams of heaven, methinks, I see.

X.

O ! lead me still, as thou hast ever led,
To Him, whose power on earth we faintly see—
The orphan's refuge ! and the orphan's God !
And, when He sets this weary spirit free,
O ! lead me still, unto those blessed bower—
Thy home of light, where bloom perennial flowers !

SONNETS—INDIA.
—

I.

WHAT buried ages mingle in my dreams,
And visions wild of dread sublimity,
While slowly pacing by thy lordly streams,
I muse, “ Niobe of nations ! ” on thee.
The page of history unveiled seems,
And virtue’s brightest triumphs there I see ;
The victor’s laurel, and the patriot’s crown,
And Science’ trophies piled aspiring high—
Braving the tempest’s darkest, gloomiest frown,
And, almost impious, reaching to the sky !
A giddy throb my wondering pulses own,
And, lost in admiration, mute I gaze
On scenes whose memory, as ages fly,
Catch holier sympathy, and brighter blaze.

II.

My dreams dispell’d, in vain I seek around
The faintest semblance of those visions fair ;
All-grasping Glory sits apart discrown’d,
Her monuments swept, or melted in the air !

Her children's hands with fetters mean are bound,
 And none, alas ! to loose those fetters dare ;
 And Science, stooping from her condor flight,
 Now grovels low in dark, Cimmerian gloom !
 The victor's path is lost in rayless night,
 The patriot's crown lies buried in the tomb.
 Each nobler virtue now has found its grave,
 And hideous sins thy hallow'd bosom stain ;
 At freedom's altar whines the recreant slave,
 And servile hugs the despot's loathsome chain !

III.

And shall I to the future turn my gaze ?
 The future is a scald book to man,
 And none so high presumes his sight to raise ;
 God's mystic secrets who shall dare to scan ?
 But sure it is no mighty sin to dream ;
 I dreamt a dream of strange and wild delight,
 Freedom's pure shrine once more illumed did seem,
 The clouds had pass'd beneath the morning light ;
 On beauty's cheek I mark'd the tear-drops dry,
 And sighs and groans for ever fled the land ;
 Science again aspir'd to the sky,
 And patriot valour watch'd the smiling strand :
 A dream ! A dream ! Why should a dream it be ?
 Land of my fathers ! canst thou ne'er be free ?

DEATH'S INVITATION.

I.

COME, little cherub, come to me,
 I'll give thee on my breast

A nēst so soft, a bed so warm,
 'Twill lull thee to thy rest ;
 And sweet, my bird, that sleep shall be,
 When darkness' flown I'll waken thee.

II.

Thou drooping form of lovely youth,
 Sweet maiden, fond and fair,
 Nay, sit not thou apart to weep—
 With sighs to rend the air ;
 O, come to me, my blooming flower,
 I'll place thee in a happy bower.

III.

And thou, fond turtle, lonely dove,
 That steep'st thy husband's bier,
 Come, hither come, and I will wipe
 Thy burning, briny tear,
 And I will ease thy heaving breast,
 And calm thy troubled soul to rest.

IV.

Art thou a wretch to misery born,
 And yet wouldst happy be ?
 Wouldst fly the bitter taunts of pride ?
 Then, stranger, come to me ;
 And I will hide thy weary head,
 Till earth and sea restore the dead.

V.

Come, sinner, come, come child of guilt,
 Remorse has here no sting ;

Thou wretched captive cease to mourn,
 For peace to thee I bring :
 'Tis mine to watch the hollow eye,
 'Tis mine to wipe your tear-drops dry.

VI.

The rich man turns away with scorn,
 Come, orphan, here to rest ;
 Thy sunken checks, and wasted limbs,
 I'll shield them on my breast ;
 I'll shield them through the murky night,
 Nor wake theo till the morning light.

VII.

That faithless crutch supports thee not,
 Come feeble man of years,
 A safer prop to thee I'll lend,
 I'll hush thy boding fears ;
 Nay, fly not—fly not, turn again,
 I bring relief, but give no pain.

VIII.

And, O ye pure—ye angel minds !
 Ye righteous sons of earth !
 The minister of God's holiest love,
 'Tis mine to crown your worth ;
 To save from harins to me is given,
 And I alone can lead to heaven !

THE MORNING STAR.

I.

THE morning star,
 On rosy car

E'er foremost to proclaim the day,
 From dewy bed,
 All blushing red,
 Through night's dull chaos bursts her way.

II.

Soft shoots afar,
 The lovely star,
 The beam that lights her timid eyes ;
 With silent voice
 The worlds rejoice,
 And smiles illume the murky skies.

III.

Sleep quits her reign,
 O'er steep and plain
 The early labourer plodding far,
 On dewy lawn,
 Ere wakes the dawn,
 Exulting greets the lonely star.

IV.

So soft and bright
 Its beacon light,
 It seems a radiant home of love ;
 A flickering beam,
 A fairy dream,
 Or gleam of heaven above !

V.

A sparkling isle
 Of love and smile,
 It floats on ether's joyous sea—
 A home of rest,

For spirits blest,
For spirits pure and free !

VI.

Sweet shimm'ring star,
That wand'rest far,
From hill to rill, to valleys green ;
Where mist-wreaths sleep,
Where torrents leap,
Where listless ocean-waves are seen !

VII.

Thy radiant light,
So soft and bright,
Hath power to check our scalding tears ;
Our hearts to wile,
From care beguile,
And hush our rising fears.

VIII.

I love thee most
Of all the host
That deck heaven's stainless canopy ;
Ere morning breaks
With purple streaks,
I love afar to follow thee.

IX.

Emblem of Heaven !
To thee 'tis given
To show how Mercy blazeth bright—
Thou lonely star,
That shinest afar,
Thou twinkling realm of light !

X.

Stay, meteor, stay !
 One moment stay,
 And let me gaze my fill ;—
 Thou wearest fast,
 Thy reign is past,
 Thou may'st not wait our will.

XI.

The star is gone,
 Its course is run,
 Its lovely light has left the sky :
 There's Mercy yet !
 But we forget
 That time is hurrying by.

RUINS.

I.

Is this the end of mortal toil ?
 Must man's great works thus ever die ;
 His mighty structures crumbling fall,
 And dwindle still, as ages fly ?
 I stand where stood the good and great,
 But what abideth of their state ?

II.

The splendours of their mighty name,
 Like sounds and dreams, away have past ;
 And where the song of triumph rose,
 The hooting owl now hails the blast !
 Smitten and shatter'd round me lie
 The towers sublime that pierced the sky !

III.

And nestles in the sacred fanes
 The wild jackal and boding rook ;
 The spider weaves her thin, gray web,
 In dreary chamber's silent nook ;
 On riven porch the ivy crawls,
 And rank weeds mock the broken walls !

IV.

Where blazed a thousand brilliant lights
 The moon with pallid radiance shines,
 And piteous howls the desert gale ;
 While thoughts sublime, and great designs,
 Alike lie buried in the tomb,
 In one unhallow'd, dreary gloom !

V.

Hail ! ruins, hail ! ye seem to tell,
 Man's glories ever thus decay
 "O where are they ?" we call aloud,
 And Echo answers—" Where are they !"
 In vain on earthly hopes we trust ;
 Behold, how dust returns to dust !

STANZAS.

I.

Not temples rear'd by mortal hands,
 Nor altars built of stone,
 Can consecrate the hallow'd thought
 That turns to Thee alone.

Wherever pour'd, it matters not,
 That prayer will reach to Thee,
 Which rushes from a contrite heart,
 While tears are gushing free.

II.

Nor is that worship vain that dares
 With steadfast eyes to see,
 In all the wond'rous works around,
 A present Deity!
 Unlearn'd in lore that stoops to kneel
 Upon the blasted heath,
 And feels the while that Thou look'st down
 On all alike beneath.

III.

No temple this where now I stand ;
 Above—the sky is clear ;
 The waning moon is sinking down ;
 But 'Thee, I feel Thee here :
 And here I kneel, with heart subdued
 And thoughts resign'd to Thee ;
 One only boon I humbly crave—
 My God ! forsake not me.

THE ATHEIST'S DOOM.

I.

UPON a tempest-troubled sea
 The lone ship sweepeth on ;
 And not a star, to light its path,
 Now shimmers through those banners dun—
 The clouds so grim and dark.

II.

But onward still it braves the storm ;
 No needle points its way ;
 And, o'er the trackless waters borne,
 It wanders far astray—
 That lone and helmeless bark !

III.

O whither, to what haven shore,
 It speeds to find its rest ?
 Through foam and wind, with haughty prow,
 It cleaves the ocean's breast,
 Regardless of the gloom !

IV.

But lo ! now shatter'd on the rocks,
 A wreck it passes by ;
 And, lost beneath the boist'rous waves,
 Its richest treasures lie ;
 Such is the Atheist's doom !
 Alas ! nor learning, pride, nor state,
 Can e'er avert that awful fate.

LINES WRITTEN FOR MY SON'S ALBUM.

2ND MARCH, 1874.

I.

THE sky is dark, the tempest raves
 Around us and above,
 And boist'rous is the sea beneath ;
 But God is God of Love !

II.

O, stout of heart ! hold firm the helm,
O, stout of hand ! row on ;
With steadfast faith and purpose high,
Through storm and wave push on.

III.

Fear not the lightning's fitful glare,
Fear not the breaker's roar ;
Fear not the tempest's angry howl
Behind us and before.

IV.

True to thy charge, O eagle heart !
True to thy God above,
Thou must not fail the bourne to win,
For God is God of Love !

V.

But wavering heart will ne'er surmount
The billows of this sea ;
Our bark is frail, a stalwart arm
She needs from thee and me.

VI.

Strong be thy arm and stout thy heart
The tempest to outspeed,
The rest His love that never fails
Will give us in our need.

VII.

Our need is sore : but He is nigh
 Though gloomy be the hour,
 With Him we'll drive before the blast,
 Above the billows tower.

VIII.

One thought, one hope must be our guide—
 The God of Love looks down :
 We cannot faint, we dare not yield ;
 The goal, it must be won.

IX.

And worthy is the goal to win
 Through tempest and through foam ;
 For the frail bark a haven safe,
 For the weary heart a home !

X.

On, on, with steady aim and true !
 On, on, with dauntless brow !
 The sky is dark, but through the gloom
 His love is peering now.

XI.

The hour to faint has long past by ;
 Row on, thou strong of hand ;
 There, far beyond the water's edge,
 Behold the promised land !

XII.

Let skies be dark, let winds be rude,
As they have been before;
The stalwart arm and fearless heart
Will always win the shore.

XIII.

Be to thy purpose only true,
Firm in thy trust in Heaven,
The help thou needest, it will come,
And what thou ask'st be given.

LINES WRITTEN FOR THE ALBUM OF A
YOUNG CHRISTIAN LADY.

I.

God's blessings on thee, happy child !
Be fair of heart as fair of face,
As free from passions vain and wild,
As may the best of human race.

II.

Pray to the Giver of all good
To guard thee from the ills of life,
To keep intact thy fortitude
Amid the storms of worldly strife.

III.

On earth all bliss thou may'st not find,
The best must mix their joys with tears
Blest if you gain with eyelids wet
The happy life of never-ending years.

IV.

That goal, my child, keep aye in view,
 The life of bliss that knows no end,
 Alike to Christian and to heathen due,
 From God, the Christian's and the heathen's friend.

V.

That God who ruleth not by creeds,
 Who claims the stainless heart and pure,
 Who judgeth not by words, but deeds :
 Of His abounding love make sure.

VI.

Then boldly tread your onward way ;
 The thorns will bend, the brambles break,
 Night's darkness will be bright as day,
 Till from this sleep of life you wake :
 Awake to bliss unseen, unknown,
 The bliss of angels, and your own !

WELCOME TO THE PRINCE OF WALES.

A PRIZE POEM.

1875.

I.

WHY sends Britannia her eldest son
 To India's distant shore,
 Braving the dangers and the storms
 Behind him and before ?
 Daring on seas the elemental strife,
 Daring on land the Syed's knife,—
 What comes he to explore ?

II.

Is it because the Russian's foot
Is nearer to Kabool ?
Is it because the Persian proud
Is now the Cossack's tool ?
And fears Britannia that, a passage found,
The invaders might on Indian ground
O'erturn her peaceful rule ?

III.

Queen of the Seas, throw back such fears ;
They are unworthy thee !
The Cossack shall not thee despoil,
Nor India Cossack be :
Our mutual love twice sixty years
Hath counted now, through smiles and tears,
And one in heart are we !

IV.

While floats above thy banner brave,
We sleep secure in peace ;
Think'st thou we know not how to prize
A boon so great as this ?
And will the rugged Northern Bear,
To break this rest, to us repair ?
Then let him well arm'd be !
From Himálay to far Ceylon
The races all will rise as one,—
All true alike to thee !

V.

Welcome, most welcome, Prince of peace !
Of virtuous parents born ;

Behold thine Empire's far extent :
 None brighter crown hath worn.
 Read, read the hearts that beat for thee;
 Their wish is only one,
 That thou, like Victoria, pure may be,
 And good as Albert gone.
 Then shall thy kingdom aye endure—
 The King of kings loves but the pure.

VI.

From Káshi's sacred fane shall rise
 A holy prayer for thee ;
 On Pooree's sod, in Brindábun,
 We'll bend the reverent knee :
 For God is one, our God and thine,
 We'll pray to Him at every shrine
 That thou may'st blessed be.

VII.

Hail, future Lord of India, hail !
 But Heaven delay thy reign.
 Long may thy holy Mother live ;
 But when, relieved from earthly pain,
 She, like the sun, sinks down to rest,
 Plant thou her virtues in thy breast,
 Her wisdom in thy brain.

VIII.

A blessed life, O Prince, be thine !
 And rest the blessing in thy line !
 Thus shall we pray for thee :
 Rejoice a subject nation's heart
 By being good as great thou art :—
 Our Prince, thus welcome we !

POETICAL SQUIBS.

Translated from the *Pushtoo* of Ildooz Hossein, and dedicated to Sir George Campbell, for some time one of H.I.M.'s great Preconsuls in the East.

THE LAY OF ZUBBERDUST KHÁN.

I.

Who has not heard of Chingez Khán !
The greatest, sure, of lords was he ;
He was the lord of many lords,
And of the whole of Tartary.

II.

The sun that daily shines on all,
Without his 'hest he ne'er arose ;
The gentle moon with silver light
Did never dare to light his foes.

III.

And many slaves of high emprise
As vassal-lords his gateway throng'd ;
Lieutenants and sub-lieutenants named,
To them the power to rule belong'd.

IV.

Among the proudest of the band,
 Among the stubbornest of them all,
 The very first was Zubberdust Khán,
 The chieftain of Alphoorá Hall.

V.

He reign'd o'er Bungloo's marshy land
 With sturdy hand and obstinate will ;
 The Káffirs groan'd, e'en Tártárs quaked :
 His iron rod who did not feel ?

VI.

In Bungloo's land before had reign'd
 Hállooza, a chief of warlike name,
 And Grunti Khán, the Káffir's friend,
 And Beedaroon, of classic fame.

VII.

The last was Geeray Khán, the true ;
 Last, but not least revered was he :
 Now times were changed, for Zubberdust
 Could never rule from passion free.

VIII.

The Khán had many liegemen true ;
 He sent them one by one away ;
 Idonee proud he could not brook,
 And Thomán was too good to stay.

IX.

Damferá was a Toorki slave,
 By self estoem'd as Noshirwán just;
 But Chingez did not prize him so,
 And sent him back to Zubberdust.

X.

Another slave had Zubberdust bought
 In the slave-market of Tagfore,
 Bernádeen was the fellow's name,
 Great in intrigue, in intellect poor.

XI.

"Ho!" said Zubberdust, speaking loud,
 "Thus shall we reign, my minions, hear!
 Whate'er I say, it must be done;
 Wrong you must make like right appear.

XII.

"Reports you must write in pure Kálmuck;
 I hate the nasty colour blue;
 Let it be red, the book large-sized,
 The accounts all flaring, though not true.

XIII.

"Thus Zubber acts," "Thus Zubber thinks,"
 "This Zubber means," "That Zubber hopes;"
 Such be the burden of your song,
 Garnish'd with similes and tropes."

XIV.

“To hear is to obey,” Bernádeon whined ;
 And ever from that doleful day,
 While groan’d the land, the world sang loud
 Of Zubber’s deeds, the lying lay.

XV.

“Destroy,” “Break down,” “Root up,” “Ignite :”
 The orders follow’d thick and fast,
 And thick and fast the waste went on,
 While good men turn’d with fear aghast.

XVI.

“The Káffir, he must learn to ride,
 The Káffir must not read Kálmuck,
 Or, if the lazy dog will read,
 Let him go read the big red book.

XVII.

“His purse is full ; that must be cured ;
 Tillís¹ must not disturb his sleep :
 We’ll sweep the cash, then drain bad swamps,
 And other hopeful deeds achieve.”

XVIII.

Great was the name of Zubberdust Khán.
 Great was his power for weal or woe ;
 The little weal he ever did
 Brought with it, aye, a smashing blow.

¹ *Tillá* is a golden coin of Tartary.

XIX.

The brilliant reign of Chingez Khán
Witness'd at last a brilliant deed,
Both Zubberdust and Bernádeen
Received the wrongful rulers' meed.

XX.

They both were hung, so legends tell ;
And Bungloo's land with joy went mad,
The red book was no longer read,
For Chingez' self pronounced it bad.

THE SONG OF THE ERRANT KNIGHT.

I.

THE electric wire the letters flash'd
That Zubberdust his spurs had won :
The witches sung, the warlocks danc'd,
The d—l, he join'd the cotillon !

II.

The Knight received the tidings glad
While in his mountain-home afar ;
Beside him sat old Bernádeen,
And grim and crusty Eedagár.

III.

An unco' sight it was to see
The three old carles join hand in hand,
And reel as heldames drunk may reel
When on their legs they cannot stand.

IV.

Ho, Meckájeo ! come forth and list
 The wondrous tale of knighthood won,
 And haste to join the merry dance
 The d—l himself is leading on.

V.

Ring out ! Ring out ! The bugle brays,
 The Knight must wander far and wide ;
 The impatient burghers fain wculd see
 Their chief bedeck'd in knighthood's pride.

VI.

The witches on their broomsticks mount,
 Sir Knight prefers to ride an ass ;
 His belted sword hangs by his side,
 He dons his armour made of brass.

VII.

For spurs he uses dead men's bones,
 His cuirass is of donkey-leather,
 His helmet is of pewter gilt
 Surmounted by a gray goose feather.

VIII.

Accoutred thus for peace or war,
 Well-mounted on his braying steed,
 Sir Knight sets forth, by valour fired,
 To win the daring chieftain's meed.

IX.

In days of yore Sir Hudibras
A tailor took for faithful squire ;
A barber's trade old Bernádeen
Gives up to fan his master's fire.

X.

Bring forth a steed for Squire to ride,
A biggish goat from Pátná's land,
Such as the gipsy jugglers lead
For apes to mount from strand to strand.

XI.

Well-mounted now are Knight and Squire,
The witches and the warlocks all ;
The d—l, he rides a large black cat,
And thus they leave their mountain-hall.

XII.

And thus they tramp through hill and dale,
Through Bungloo's land they forward go,
From north to south, from east to west,
Listening to the tales of woe.

XIII.

From jail to jail, as Howard went ;
To locks-up which he did not see ;
From Gunduck's vale where poppies grow,
To Teestá's banks where waste-lands lie.

XIV.

On, on, they march ; 'cross swamp and ditch,
 With hooting boys behind their back ;
 Amazed in crowds the burghers throng,
 Or curiously their footsteps track.

XV.

"Are they gone mad ?" the bumpkins ask ;
 "Such pageant sure we ne'er did see ;"
 The housewives look with fear askance,
 The young girls giggle in their glee.

XVI.

Crown them with bays, ye silly jades !
 Where's now your shrill-toned, wild *wooloo*?²
 Behold your Knight of high emprise !
 Behold his mettled warriors true !

XVII.

The bays are brought, and sandal white,
 With leaves and flowers the Knight is crown'd,
 And garlands on his neck are thrown ;
 The housewives kiss him all around.

XVIII.

A kiss Bernádeen fain would get,
 They only tweak him by the nose ;
 They pull the ears of Meckájee,
 And Eedagár comes in for blows.

² A shriek of joyous welcome. Lord Northbrook received it on visiting some Hindu temples.

XIX.

The fun and frolic furious grow ;
Behold, the sky is overcast ;
The d—l has left his large black cat,
And rides upon the blatant blast.

XX.

The witches shriek, the warlocks rave ;
The Knight and Squire are whirl'd away !
In palace-hall or gay parterre
None e'er has seen them since that day.

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REMINISCENCES

OF A

KERÁNI'S LIFE.

BY

SHOSHEE CHUNDER DUTT.

"A chiel's amang ye takin notes,
And, faith, he'll prent it!"

BURNS

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REMINISCENCES OF A KERÁNI'S LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

A MERCHANT'S APPRENTICE.

FORTY years ago! Well, forty years is a very long time to look back upon. The old man with gray hair and gray beard now before you had not then yet attained the last of his teens, and was enjoying the full vigour of his youth, with a noodle's head full of bombast and fustian, and a vigorous imagination, building all sorts of castles in the air.

Forty years ago! What changes have occurred since then, how many friends have dropped off, how many pleasures have been numbered with the dead, how many recollections crowd on the brain and embarrass it!

Well, I was yet a youngster then; not quite a boy, but hardly yet a man; slim and not ungainly,—I may say so now when I am as ungainly as a human being can be; my youthful memory stocked with quotations from Shakespeare, Milton, and Bacon; regarding myself as a prodigy not unequal to the admirable Crichton.

Raw from school, with the melodious warblings of

6 REMINISCENCES OF A KERÁNIS LIFE.

D. L. R.¹ still vibrating in his brains, what was this young man to do to commence with? Of course he could start a newspaper or a magazine; nothing, in his estimation, was easier: or, better still, he could write books for the edification of mankind in general, and the Hindu race in particular; or he might become a pedagogue, and for the benefit of others unload his brain of the perilous stuff that was playing the deuce with it. All these appeared to him to be quite easy and feasible, and promised more wealth (a consideration never to be lost sight of) than Alládin's lamp had ever fetched. But papa shook his head, and said "Nay" to every brilliant idea as it cropped up, and the upshot was that, at the age of eighteen, I joined the respectable firm of Smasher, Mutton, and Co., as an apprentice.

There were no conveyances in those days for apprentices, though now there are. The number of *ticcá ghárris* was very small—scarcely enough to meet the requirements of well-paid keránis; and the number of *ticcá pálkis* was still less. Those, therefore, who drew no pay, did not think it *infra dig.* to ~~trudge~~ to office on foot; and, if any found the sun too hot for him, there was the *cháttú*, a very respectable protection for the head—I mean those *bursáti cháttús* with long poles, which—alas! for poetry and romance—have now become extinct.

Well, protected by a *cháttú*, and with a high *pugree* on my head (my first attempt to make one without previous study being necessarily very clumsy), I appeared before Mr. Pigeon, the managing clerk of the firm of Smasher, Mutton, and Co., and made as stiff a salaám as any Young Bengal has rendered either before or after that memorable

¹ David Lester Richardson, Principal and Professor of Literature, Hindu College.

period. Mr. Pigeon received the obeisance with a smile. Of course he did not return it ; no one has ever returned the salaám of an apprentice. "What did I know ? What would I wish to learn ? Did I understand accounts ? Did I know what a ledger was ? Could I docket a letter, or draft a reply ?"—these and many other equally impertinent questions were launched out with mortifying volubility. They were all Greek to me ; I had learnt English, but no Greek ; I had never come across such uncouth words as "ledger," "docket," or "draft ! "

With smiling hopelessness Mr. Pigeon made me over to his head Báboo, Kinoorám Chuckerbutty, to make of me what he could ; and with supercilious contempt the Báboo told me to mend his pens. Was Young Bengal to submit to this ? Shades of Bacon, Addison, and Johnson, was the student who had kept company with you so long, and pored over your pages night and morning, now to mend the pens of an old keráni ? But then, another thought also arose. Was the very first day of apprenticeship to be signalised by a revolt ? My young noddle was troubled and vexed ; the pens were mended in moody silence and discontent.

I had no idea before that I understood *duftry's* work so well. Kinoo Báboo could not mend pens himself, and those mended by me were to his liking. He became very gracious, gave me small additions and subtractions to work out—*e. g.* coolie-hire so much, add to it punká-puller's wages, then deduct floating-balances in hand, etc. ; and I soon came to the conclusion that I kept the entire accounts of the firm though Kinoorám drew the pay. The very important duty of entering letters in the peon's book came also to be assigned to me ; and by the end of a fortnight I thought I had fairly established a

claim to a salary of at least a hundred rupees to commence with.

The fortnight past, I made a low salaám to Mr. Pigeon ; not so stiff as on the first occasion, and yet sufficiently so to indicate that I was of the Young Bengal genus, which Kinooráni was not ; and I asked how, Mr. Pigeon thought, I was working. There was the same smile as before, but the words were not encouraging.

"I have seen no work from you yet. What have you been doing ?"

No work from me ! I who had kept all the accounts of the firm for a fortnight and entered all their letters in the peon's book, I to be told that to my face, when I felt certain that I had done quite as much as, if not more than, Mr. Pigeon had ever done in a month ! An eclaircissement with Kinoo Báboo was now unavoidable. I taxed him with unfairness in not having reported to Mr. Pigeon all the assistance I had given him. He laughed outright. The sums I had worked out were all worked wrong, he said. The peon's book was ordinarily kept by a *sircár* on Rs. 8, who made the entries better than I had done.

The indignity was too great to be borne. It brought on fever, and I was laid up. I never returned to Messrs Smasher, Mutton, and Co.'s office again.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST EXPERIENCES IN THE TREASURY.

BEHOLD me six months after seated behind the counter of the Government Treasury, this time no longer an apprentice, but hedged with all the dignity that appertains to a paid servant of the Government.

What a grand sight for a young inexperienced man of eighteen ! Rupees scattered on all sides in delicious confusion ! Bright, *juloosee* rupees, quite new from the Mint ! Small rupees—halves and quarters—equally bright and in heaps, in quantities which my inexperienced arithmetic had never before summed up. Gold—brilliant gold coins—with the quaint device of the lion walking majestically beneath the luxuriant date-tree—not handfuls of them, but in piles which the mind could not have conjured up even in dreams ;—there they were all before me scattered in every direction ! I wonder who suggested the device on the gold-mohur. The date is an Indian tree, the lion an animal of Africa. Of course one can conceive of an African lion being left in a cage on Indian soil beneath the shade of a date-tree ; but how could a lion at large be there, unless he had broken loose from the Barrackpore Park or some big ex-king's menagerie ? I think, the device should have shown a royal tiger under the tree instead of a lion. To this the critic may object that the lion represents England's motto,

which the tiger would not. True; but the correct conclusion from the premises is that the lion's proper place is on an English coin. On an Indian coin the tiger is more appropriate: and, altogether, it is better that England should bear on her escutcheon two royal animals in place of one, being mistress of both the east and the west. But lion or tiger it was the bright gold that arrested my attention, and I was in rapture for days.

And then the sound—“*chinck, chinck, chinck!*” Talk of the music of the shepherds! What is it—what can it be—compared to the music of gold-mohurs and rupees? What soft variety too there was in the sound, gold giving out the most melodious “*chinck*” imaginable; silver, one just a shade harsher, but still so pleasing: while even bright copper rang out a tune that was not unpleasant!

“*Chinck! chinck! chinck!*” on all sides. How the sound rung in my ears even in my sleep. For days, weeks, and months it haunted me as a pleasing fancy—a ravishing dream; till by every-day repetition it lost its charm, ceased to please, and ultimately became absolutely annoying. Thus even the sweets of life deaden the sense of pleasure by repetition!

There were other things also for a novice to note with wonder. The number of men coming in and going out; their faces, nationality, and the errands on which they came: these comprised a study in themselves. There stands the Jew—always and everywhere the most noted of men—with a large bundle of bank-notes (I am speaking of days past when there were no Government currency notes, but only notes of the Bank of Bengal in circulation) under his arm. What has brought him here? He has bought some chests of opium, and wants to send them off to China at once, and has come to pay

down the price. There is the salt merchant scantily clad, redolent of mustard-oil, *chundan*, and putrid *áttur*, with his agent perspiring at every pore and tottering under the weight of a large bag full of rupees, waiting to have a pass for his salt. The respectable English merchant is there, with his *sircár* by his side, to pay for salt or opium, or to invest in the five-per-cent. loan which is about to be closed. The up-country *koteewál*, his mouth stuffed with *pán* and spices, has come for money due on London bills. The sleek, oily Báboo has stepped in for the interest on his Government Promissory Notes. The peon of some great Civilian, with all the insolence which his master's position permits him to arrogate, is clamouring for the *tullub* of that master, which he insists on being first paid. Lieut. Sabertash, of H.M.'s 290th, wants the money due on a bill from Khámptipore, and is about to create a disturbance on the plea of precedence.

The lieutenant in his red coat is a striking sight. He has lost his temper, and has not yet found his money. Why should he not be paid first? He is an officer of the British Army; do the shroffs and *kerámis* know what that means? Not paid yet? He runs up to the Burrá Sáheb and lodges a complaint. The Burrá Sáheb is an old officer of much experience, and does not see what there is to complain of. The lieutenant must await his turn; "first come first served" is the principle of the office, and cannot be departed from.

"What! not in favour of an officer of the British Army?"

"No!"

This is intolerable. Lieut. Sabertash comes down the staircase as fast as he went up. He is choking with rage, and must give vent to it. Ah! the unfortu-

nate sepoy on duty ! He has not got the bayonet fixed on his musket, in strict accordance to military rules. The lieutenant calls for the Subadár in command at once. This is his own independent element ; no Burrá Sáheb can interfere with him here.

“ Place the sentinel under arrest, and send him to the fort,” is the sharp order given ; and the man is placed under arrest at once, and despatched to Fort William.

Simultaneously, the Burrá Sáheb writes to the Commanding Officer, to complain of the lieutenant’s interference, and explains that in such a crowded place as the Government Treasury the bayonet cannot be kept fixed on the musket without causing accidents to the crowd. The sepoy is released forthwith ; our deponent knoweth not whether the lieutenant got a reprimand for his interference. From the Treasury he drove off with a smiling face, like a victorious soldier from the field of battle.

CHAPTER III.

HOW I GOT INTO FAVOUR.

THE alphabet of a cash-office is easily learnt. "Passes," "advices," "challins," "dákhilla," "bank post-bills," "cheques," "interest-drafts," "balance per contra;" all the mystery and enigma involved in these words were learnt by me in one week. The Burrá Sáheb was a good man, overflowing with the milk of human kindness, and was pleased to think kindly of me. A sort of indirect opposition to my appointment he had urged on account of my youth; but this gave way on his being told that I had a moonsiff's diploma in my pocket. The law lost a clever judge! But did not the Treasury gain a most clever cashier?

As I got initiated into the mysteries of my work, I felt that the poetry of the cash-office, which had charmed me on entering it, was dying out. The music of bright rupees, and even of bright gold-mohurs, had long ceased to please, and the counting of bank-notes was a bother; but I was fast getting into favour, and that kept me in spirits.

Let me see; I believe it was at the time of the first Afghán War that we were sending up lots of money North-West. We had placed a large sum on board a steamer, but the Captain had left without signing the usual receipt. The money had been in my charge, and the Burrá Sáheb had

given orders to place it on board, and so I demanded a receipt from him. He smiled. Why was the receipt necessary? Was it not sufficient that he had given the order? Would any one hold *me* responsible if anything went wrong with the money? But I was firm.

"A receipt was the usual acquittance for money paid," said I, "and there was no reason why this particular case should be otherwise dealt with. Life and death were in the hands of God. What if the Burrá Sáheb died suddenly, and the Captain of the steamer bolted with the money? Possibly I would not be held responsible; but still I would have nothing to show that I had allowed the money to pass out under regular orders."

I was afraid of my obstinacy, but the Burrá Sáheb took it in good part.

"If I don't give you a receipt," said he, "will you be dreaming all night that the Captain had bolted and the Burrá Sáheb was dead?"

"Possibly I might. I would certainly feel somewhat uneasy that everything had not been done in regular form, as usual."

A formal receipt and discharge was thereupon given with a smile, and I rose vastly in the Burrá Sáheb's estimation.

Another cashier, an old man, was a bungler. It is necessary to explain to the uninitiated that all complete bundles of notes contain fifty pieces each. Of course every bundle in the hands of a cashier would not be complete, the surplusage of each description forming small bundles of from two to forty-nine notes. Well, on taking over the balance of the day one evening, the Burrá Sáheb came to a bundle containing forty-nine notes of 1000 Rs. each. The number was correct, and accorded with the

figures on the balance sheet before him. But, just as the bundle was about to be dropped into the iron chest, old Goberdhone put in that that was a "missing" bundle.

"What bundle?"

"Missing bundle, sir!"

The Burrá Sáheb counted the notes over again; once, twice, three times. The number invariably was forty-nine. He went carefully over the balance sheet; there was no mistake there even of a single pie. What then did the words "missing bundle" mean?

"You say this is a missing bundle; what is missing? Is the balance not correct? Has any note been lost?"

"O no, sir! that is a missing bundle only."

The patience of Job would have given way. I was at once sent for.

"What does this man mean by saying that this bundle is a *missing* bundle?"

I asked him to explain to me in *lingua franca* what he meant, and could hardly resist bursting out in laughter when he had told me.

"Well, what does the missing bundle mean?"

"Simply this, sir: it is a 'miscellaneous' bundle, that is, formed of the accumulation of different dates."

"Only that? Then don't you allow this man to come up to me with the balance of the day again. Always bring it up yourself."

Old Goberdhone was savage with me; but how was I to blame?

CHAPTER IV.

THE ACQUAINTANCES I MADE.

THE Government Treasury is like a public mart, where one comes in contact with all sorts of people in the ordinary course of business. One day there came a young English cadet, with the bloom of old England still on his cheeks—the handsomest specimen of the human race that I have ever seen. He at once became the observed of all observers; there was a crowd around him; every one was anxious to exchange words with him. I thought he would get annoyed, there were so many after him at once. But with the most agreeable face in the world he had also the smoothest temper, and he laughed and chatted with everybody without betraying the least impatience. If all Englishmen had been as even-tempered as that boy, would not the race have been idolised by the Bengalis? That cadet certainly was idolised on that day.

Unfortunately, men of a different stamp are more common in the world. A young Marine apprentice, attached to the Pilot Service, I think, came a few days after, and exhibited the reverse side of the national character with great force. He also had some money to receive like the cadet, but would not exchange a word with any one and was impatient of delay. He lost his temper in no time, if it can be said that he had any at all

to lose. Taking up a paper-weight of shots he struck one of the assistant-cashiers with it, because his work had not been sufficiently expedited. The "nigger"—as we are all almost invariably called by our masters—though also a young man himself, was quite equal to the occasion. He snatched the paper-weight from the apprentice's hand and returned the blow with somewhat greater smartness. An Englishman on being struck always returns to his senses. He is apt to consider every man his inferior who does not establish by the incontrovertible logic of force that he is his equal. The young man behaved very quietly afterwards, but he never spoke a word with any one.

After-experience has brought before me many repetitions of the conduct of the Marine apprentice. Elderly men, men of business, pious Christians, or at least men so famed, have all passed in review, and betrayed the same hastiness of temper, the same precipitancy in committing an outrage, the same submissiveness when beaten back; but in an experience of more than thirty years I cannot say that I have come across half-a-dozen examples deserving to be remembered along with that of the young cadet. The cadet of that day will be a general-officer now; but the English army is so sparsely distributed over Her Majesty's vast dominions, that I have not been able to trace out his name.

I will now refer to another gentleman whom I also recollect with kindly feelings. He was an Afghán—some relative of Sháh Soojáh, he said—whom the British Government had agreed to shelter. He seemed to be every inch a gentleman, treated all men with courtesy, evinced the greatest affability in his manners, and was only wanting in gratitude to the nation of whose pension

he was the recipient, but for whom he had no good word to say. I wish somebody would offer a prize for an essay to explain how the English nation, who are thoroughly honest, and are always anxious to do good, come to be misunderstood and unappreciated. With some this is owing to the foible noticed in the Marine apprentice; but surely all Englishmen are not of the same stamp. Why are they all alike disliked, if not hated?

CHAPTER V.

HINDUISM *versus* CHRISTIANITY.

I WAS very much surprised one day to meet with an orthodox up-country Hindu who said he was staying at Spence's. He said that he did not know anybody in Calcutt, and not knowing where to find accommodation had proceeded to the hotel for apartments. He of course did not take his meals there. For that purpose he went over every day to Burá Baza—to the shops.

This gave me quite a new idea of Hinduism. In my youth and ignorance I had mistaken the orthodox dolts of Calcutt as representing the entire class of orthodox Hindus. I now found for the first time that Bengal had gathered a great many prejudices which were not entertained by Hindus elsewhere. What harm could there be in living in the same house with Europeans if you did not eat with them? what harm in sitting on chairs and lying on beds they had used? Northern India allowed all this; Bengal did not. I have since found still greater divergences on diverse other yet more important points. No up-country Hindu carries his dying father or mother to the river-side; to them no place is better to die in than home. No up-country Hindu throws away his *pn*, or lays by his *chillum*, if there be a Mahomedan in the same *ghrry* or boat with him. No up-country Hindu when thirsty will refuse a glass of water from a leathern *moosuk*.

And yet they are just as good Hindus as, if not better Hindus than, their brothers of Bengal.

In discussions on these points, which relieved the monotony of official work, we had a very good champion of Hinduism in a mohurer named Gungájal Báboo, an old Vysnub of great sanctity, who imitating the eccentricities of Krishna, had taken a second wife in his old age. He of course pooh-poohed the orthodoxy of up-country Hindus, but being a Vysnub he was obliged in theory to cry down the restrictions of caste; and yet, on this very point of caste he was a great stickler. The phases of Hinduism are so multiform that it is extremely difficult to reconcile them one with another.

The amours of Krishna were of course a prolific source of banter, but I shall never forget the earnestness of the old man when he explained the tenets of his faith with an unruffled temper. "Krishna was—what? the same as Christ,—an incarnation of the *love* of God. *God is love*: the whole life of Krishna explains this, for it explains love in all its phases; love of the child for its mother, and of the mother for her child; love between friends; love between lover and mistress; love of the worshipper for the object worshipped. What besides this does the story of Krishna expound? There are indecent anecdotes mixed up with it: reject them as spurious; they are the conceptions of indecent minds, connected, where no real connection exists, with a tale of great purity. What is the history of Christ"—would the old man emphatically ask—"but a repetition of the story of Krishna in another, but not a better form?"

I did not concede all that the old man contended for, but I fully believed in the purity of his faith, and to this day believe that salvation is not for the Christian alone,

but for all who believe as this man believed, and who are true to their belief. I have a high respect for Christianity ; but I have met with few, very few Christians indeed, entitled to greater regard than this man. A very respected authority had once heard a certain Lord Bishop explaining to his congregation what sort of a place heaven was : " You will meet there with bishops and archbishops, deacons and archdeacons," etc. Well, I have no objection to all the Lord Bishops being found there ; but I feel quite certain—as certain as a human being can be on such a subject—that old Gungájal will be found there too, and perchance occupying a higher position than many bishops and archbishops.

CHAPTER VI.

CHOTÁ SÁHEBS.

I HAVE spoken of the Burrá Sáheb of the Treasury, but as yet the reader knows nothing about the Chotá Sáheb. During my incumbency of about eight years there were four Burrá Sáhebs, and five or six Chotá Sáhebs; but of course it is not necessary to describe them all. As a rule Chotá Sáhebs everywhere are short-tempered young men, knowing nothing, who expect the *ámlíh* to do everything for them, and at the same time to show them the same deference and respect as, or a shade more than, what is conceded to the Burrá Sáheb. There is no man who exacts respect more punetiliously than he who doubts his right to it.

But our Chotá Sáheb was on the whole a good man,—yain, as young men will be, flippant also, but not mischievously inclined. A fraud had been practised on the Treasury, and a small sum taken out on an interest-draft which had been paid before. The order of second payment bore the Chotá Sáheb's signature. At first his only fear was as to the view the Government would take of the matter with respect to himself; and his only thought was how to gloss over his share of the blame, and who to sacrifice as his scapegoat. Somebody suggested that perhaps the Chotá Sáheb's signature on the document was not genuine. This was a wisp of straw to the drown-

ing man. He clutched at it with intuitive eagerness. "Of course it is not my signature! Does it look much like it? I will swear in any court of justice that it is not my signature!" And so the difficulty was tided over, and the loss paid up by the *ámlíh*. The Chotá Sáheb, freed from blame, was not unwilling to pay. But the amount was very petty, and the *ámlíh* did not trouble him.

It was a matter more serious when the Chotá Sáheb began to sign all sorts of papers that were brought to him. Somebody had to pay a large sum of money (eighty thousand Rupees, I think) into the Treasury on account of somebody else. He submitted the usual *challán*, or tender of payment, to the Chotá Sáheb for signature, the *challán* being accompanied by a receipt which was to be signed after the money was actually paid in. The Chotá Sáheb signed both simultaneously. There was the acquittance signed and delivered without a single pice of the debt having been actually realised! It fell to my lot to explain to the Chotá Sáheb his mistake.

"Mistake! what mistake? If I was not to sign the paper, why was it brought to me?"

"It was brought to you only for an order on the *challán* to authorise the cashier to receive the money."

"Well, have I not signed that?"

"Yes, you have. But you have signed the receipt also before receiving the money. You ought to have waited for the cashier's acknowledgment."

"Who is the cashier then, and why has he not sent in his acknowledgment?"

"Because he has not received the money yet."

"But why has he not received the money yet? Why did he not receive it ten days ago?"

"The payment was not tendered till now."

"Bless me if I understand all this! What has gone wrong?"

"This only, that if the man had chosen it he might have gone away with your receipt without paying a pice of the money due from him."

"Then let him go. He is welcome to do so, I suppose."

The case was hopeless. There was no help for it now but to speak to the Burrá Sáheb, who of course understood the whole thing in two seconds. He kept back the Chotá Sáheb's acquittance, and told me to report to him when the money was received. An order was simultaneously issued and necessary directions given to the chuprássis that no papers were to be taken to the Chotá Sáheb for signature except by an *ámláh* of the office. But the Chotá Sáheb never attempted to understand what all this pother was about.

Another Chotá Sáheb, equally clever, did not understand why a gold-mohur, if equal to a rupee in weight, was so much smaller in size, and why bank-notes of different values had borders of different patterns when the paper used was the same. The difference between a cheque "accepted" and one "unaccepted" was also a poser; and it was mentioned of one Chotá Sáheb whom I did not know, that he used to sign papers without looking at them, and every evening several blank papers and blotting sheets were to be found on his table signed in the usual way along with other documents. It must not be forgotten however, that these Chotá Sáhebs were generally very young men, paid to learn their work, and not expected to perform it efficiently.

CHAPTER VII.

TROUBLES OF OFFICIAL LIFE—THE SINK-HOLES OF CALCUTTA.

I HAVE not yet alluded to the inconveniences of office-life ; but the reader must not conclude that there are none. The inconveniences are many, and of diverse kinds. I have referred to a fraud practised on the Treasury. The attempts made to discover the culprit gave me a lot of trouble. The man who had presented the duplicate order for payment was seen by me and by some three or four other assistants. The police, with their usual brag, said that they would trace him out without fail if he were in the land of the living, and the only little help they wanted was that of some sensible person to identify him. Of those who volunteered I was selected, and dreadful was the bother I had about it. I had to accompany the police through many of the dirtiest by-ways of this dirty city, to nooks and corners where no decent person desires to be seen.

I was first taken to the house of a seal-engraver. In a hut was a squalid woman, with a thin squalid child on her lap. A policeman in plain clothes accompanied me, and asked the woman to fetch her husband.

“ He is not at home.”

“ O yes, he is ; he told me to come for him. Tell him the Thákoorjee has brought some *muháprasúd* for him.”

I did not understand what this meant ; but the word

mahíprasád was evidently the “open sesame” for admittance. The message was taken in ; the man came out, more miserable-looking, if possible, than his miserable wife and child. He was not the man we were looking out for. The policeman and he seemed to be old acquaintances, and they had a long talk of which I did not understand a word.

Next, I was taken to the ground-floor of an old two-storied house, which was in a crumbling condition. There was a drinking party within, and they refused us admittance. The policeman in plain clothes did not come up to the house, but kept at a distance, another man being sent with me, who, I understood, was the friend or companion of the party to be identified. It would seem, therefore, that there can be no sort of real confidence between knaves. As admission into the apartments was refused, my companion began to bawl out for his friend by his nickname “Kállo Ghose.” We were kept waiting for a long time, and curious eyes were peering out every now and then from a small aperture which represented a window, to see who we were and what we wanted. At last, after about a full quarter of an hour, Kállo Ghose came out. No : he did not come out exactly ; he just opened the door partially and showed us his face. It was enough : he was not my man ; but there was no doubt that he was a villain of the worst stamp. He asked my companion why he had brought another man, a stranger, with him. The reply was communicated to him by signs which I did not understand. The friends, it seemed to me, continued to be good friends still, but Kállo Ghose launched out any but kindly glances after me. If the mysteries of Calcuttá were written by a clever hand, we would know of many things which we do not dream of.

I was next carried to a flash-house kept by some unfortunate women, being accompanied by one who was a frequenter of it, while the police waited at the nearest corner. The time was immediately after nightfall; the abominations I had to witness were awful. Admittance was given without much demur. The party assembled were three men and two women; a third woman was lying on the floor dead-drunk. There were two bottles of brandy or rum before the party, with several glasses; and they had one dish of *chabánis* also, with plenty of chillies. Of the three men one was a big quarrelsome fellow, with a red face; another, a very thin black man whom I was expected to identify; the third was a decent-looking fellow, whom I had seen before, but whom I did not know. The bully asked our business. My companion introduced me as a novice in the school of love.

"Does he drink?"

"No; but I shall drink for both."

"That won't suit us; he must drink for himself;" and a glass of brandy was handed to me.

I refused it with thanks.

"Gulp it down," said the bully, "or I will force it down your throat. What business have you here if you won't drink? We transact no business with dry lips."

I said that I had come there with my friend to see, but not to drink.

"To see what beasts we make of ourselves?"

My companion hastened to explain that I had only come to see the beauties of the house.

"That excuse won't pass with me," said the bully. "Whoever comes where I am, must do as I do. Now sir, will you drink or not?"

"I won't."

- The bully began to gesticulate; but I knew I had only to bawl out for the police in case of need. This, however, was found unnecessary. The decent-looking person I have referred to asked me if I knew him. I answered in the negative.

"I have seen you before," I said; "but I cannot remember where or under what circumstances."

"Do you know any of our party? Honour bright!"

"Honour bright! I don't know any one of you except him who has come with me."

"Well, I know you, and the family you belong to. Give me your word that you will not mention our names, nor in any way describe us to your friends, nor mention in what plight you have seen us, when you go out."

"This I can safely promise, because I do not know your names, and because my friends could not recognise you from any description I could give of you."

"A direct promise, please; otherwise I won't interfere."

I gave the direct promise required. He took the bully aside; I do not know what talismanic words he said, but the bully was at my feet in a moment, asking me to forgive his rudeness. Of course I forgave him. He insisted on shaking hands with me, and I was then allowed to depart; not without a pressing invitation from the ladies to come and see them another day.

In this manner I was carried hither and thither for some days, till the police admitted their inability to trace out the delinquent.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BURRÁ HUZOOR—NATIVE SERVILITY.

THE rolling stone gathers no moss. Be it so; but is the reverse always true? Here was I a stationary stone for years in the Treasury that had gathered no moss to speak of. We had better roll now, thought I; but in what direction?

The office of deputy-magistrate was being newly created. The first few appointments had been reserved for members of the highest native families in Calcutta, and for well-connected European candidates. But there were many others to give away. Unfortunately, I had no friends to back me; and those who I had expected would help me, did not. Young men, however, are not easily disheartened. The appointments were in the gift of a Secretary to the Government known far and wide as the Burrá Huzoor, and I waited on him to urge my claims. On the first occasion I was received and put off; on two subsequent occasions that I called I received the stereotyped answer—“*Phoorsut nehi háye.*” There was the great man on whom all eyes were turned, the dispenser of bounties and coveted honours, accessible only to people with long names, and to such others as made “*koorucishes*” and “*salaáms*” with both hands; but not to me and the like of me. I accepted my disappointment with impatience indeed, but still with as much pride as I could

call up. Years after I had the satisfaction of receiving from the same man a message that he would be glad to cultivate my acquaintance, and, subsequently to that again, an offer of a deputy-magistracyship, which I refused. I can well conceive what Dr. Johnson's feelings were when he wrote that celebrated letter to Lord Chesterfield, than which a better return blow was never given.

In the height of his greatness the Secretary to the Government would not see me. I was delighted to learn some time after that a native gentleman whom he had asked to come to him had declined to do so. This was a gentleman of independent means and station in society, who cared neither for the favours nor the frowns of the great man. He had never waited on him, though all the other big guns of Calcutta had done so, and this was a sore point with the Huzoor, who liked to see rich natives about him. He took the initiative at last, and asked to see the Báboo on the pretext of consulting him on certain points connected with native female education. The reply was that on account of domestic bereavements the Báboo never went a visiting. O ! how the Huzoor must have felt the slight.

But against one instance of this sort how many there are of a contrary kind. The great ruling passion of the native mind is servility to those in power. All our Rájáhs and Báhádoors, with their *ássás* and *sontás*, are constantly running hither and thither "to pay their respects" to this and that man—to every *topiwálli* in office in fact, quite irrespective of his claims to such attentions. I can well understand when all this bowing and cringing originate with a purpose. Then the meanness has an excuse, possibly a knavish one, but still an excuse for the despicable position assumed. But I have never been able to understand why most of our purse-

proud ignoramuses, who can have no ends to compass, go ou demeaning themselves *ad nauseam*, crying, “*Jo Hookum*” to every puppy that writes C.S. after his name, merely as it would seem for that meanness’ sake. When Báboo Hobo Gul Ghose goes avisiting great folks in all directions we excuse him, because we know that the man is living on his wit’s end. An up-country millionaire, with little or no brains, runs down to Calcuttá with a long train of fancied grievances requiring the immediate attention of the Government; Báboo Hobo Gul is at once at his elbow, and offers to see him through the affair—for a consideration. The bargain is concluded without demur. Báboo Hobo Gul drives down to Government House; has an interview with the Private Secretary; even introduces his friend, the millionaire, to the Governor-General’s right hand, without speaking of his grievances, as a matter of course. The millionaire does not understand a word of English, and it costs nothing to Hobo Gul to convince him that his suit has sped well, and that it is now only a question of money. The matter will be awfully expensive; there are so many big stomachs to fill. Of course the millionaire does not mind that, and a long fable ends with the demand of a large sum of money. But Jumná Dáss Hurry Bhujun Dáss, though ignorant, is shrewd, and won’t pay the whole sum at once. Half or one-fourth of it is, after much haggling, forked out at last; and Hobo Gul never appears before the millionaire again!

And yet these are the people to whom the doors of the great are always open; and the rich nincompoops who go there willingly bring themselves down to the same level with them. It is very seldom that an Englishman returns the visit of a native gentleman; yet my countrymen are too mean-spirited to resent this.

CHAPTER IX.

TEMPEST IN A TEA-POT—THE ENGLISH OFFICE OF THE
TREASURY.

WE were all very nearly losing our appointments one day, and that when we had not the remotest idea of such a thing happening to us. The Head Cashier had suggested some alterations in the general procedure of the office, with a view to provide greater security against frauds ; but the Burrá Sáheb, a new man, had vetoed these, rejecting all the expostulations of the man who was primarily responsible for the proper working of the department. Our chief upon that submitted his resignation, which was at once accepted ; and with him we all would have had to go out, as is usual on such occasions. But, simultaneously with his resignation, the Head Cashier had sent up a memorandum of his case to the Chief Secretary to the Government ; and the Burrá Sáheb, just when he was about to fill up the vacancy, received the peremptory orders of the Government to leave matters undisturbed till a searching inquiry into the working of the office was made. For this inquiry a distinguished financier was selected ; and it resulted in his unqualified approval of all the measures which the Head Cashier had suggested, and the removal of the Burrá Sáheb to a less onerous post. As the peons and duftries noted epigrammatically on the matter : “ *Burrá Sáheb bodlee hogyá* ;

Báboo kú oopur Lárd Sáheb burrá khosee hooíh." The Burrá Sáheb's nominee, who was to have filled up the vacant Head Cashier-ship, of course flitted as fast as he had come; and the tempest in a tea-pot being over we breathed freely again, and continued working as before.

The new Burrá Sáheb was a thorough man of business, besides being a very pious Christian. He looked into every man's work with his own eyes, without neglecting his own. A great many checks and counter-checks were abolished by him, while he introduced various new ones in their place which were admitted on all hands to be exceedingly sensible and necessary. What did not give equal satisfaction were the selections he made in filling up vacancies. Even the best of men manages, in some way or other, to contract prejudices to which he steadfastly adheres. The firm conviction of this Burrá Sáheb was that Europeans always made the best office-assistants, after them East-Indians, and the natives last. This is even now the opinion of many very good men, and taken in the abstract the premises may not be unsound. But, unfortunately, no good Europeans are to be got for the salaries given in public offices, and, if you stick to your hobby, the result is that you cram your office with the refuse of Europe. As for East-Indians, as a rule they are men of no education, and are therefore fit only for mechanical duties, and nothing more. The Registrar of the Government Treasury was an East-Indian, a very good man, and with the best education of the East-Indian standard. He had been many years in the office, and moved quietly in the groove to which he was accustomed. But he was entirely upset by the changes which the new Burrá Sáheb had introduced, and it was no secret that, in accommodating himself to them, he was wholly guided by

the advice and direction of his native assistants. Like natives also (and after all what is an East-Indian but a native?) East-Indian assistants, when in power, bring around them all their brothers and brothers-in-law to partake of the loaves and fishes on the spread board. The English office of the Government Treasury had in this way become quite converted into a snug family-conclave, consisting of three brothers, two brothers-in-law, one step-son, and half-a-dozen cousins of the first, second, and third degree. The Burrá Sáheb wanted to infuse into this coterie a little new blood. A good appointment was vacant, for which several excellent native candidates were applicants. But the Burrá Sáheb would fain have a European. At last a ship-captain recommended a nephew of his, a very young man, for the post. Of course he was totally unfit for it. But then he was a European, and—would learn. The lad had sense, but no education, and after a long schooling was barely able to get through his work as a matter of routine. He fell subsequently into bad company, took to the bottle, and got drowned. This of course the Burrá Sáheb could not have prevented; but he might have given the office a better man than the hob-nail he put in. They say that the ship-captain was the Burrá Sáheb's friend, and had shown him and his family great attention on board when they came out. Was that a sufficient justification for the choice that was made? And yet there is no doubt that the Burrá Sáheb was a very good man and a pious Christian, as I have said at the outset. But prejudices, for or against, make the best men unjust at times, and the evil is that they don't see it.

Another selection made by the Burrá Sáheb at about the same time turned out somewhat better. This was for

filling up a comparatively unimportant post, carrying with it a much smaller salary. In this case also an English lad was selected ; but he was so far preferable to the other man that he was less bumptious and more willing to learn. For other very petty posts the Burrá Sáheb brought in some natives who had served under him elsewhere, and all these turned out to be efficient assistants. But the appointment of so many outsiders caused great heart-burning in the office at the time, and made the Burrá Sáheb greatly unpopular, till his sterling good qualities were developed.

CHAPTER X.

THE SUPREME COURT.

THE Jury nuisance is well known. I received one day a summons to dance attendance at the Supreme Court as a juror. Many cases were gone through. One was that of an indigo-planter charged with acts of cruelty and oppression against certain ryots. In the local court he had pleaded that he was a European by birth, and therefore not subject to trial by that court. His plea in the Supreme Court was that he was not a European, and therefore did not come within the court's jurisdiction. The case was gone through, and all the acts charged against him were proved; but the court having left the question of jurisdiction to be settled by the jury from the evidence, the majority contended that the court's jurisdiction was not proved. To this the minority did not at first agree, but afterwards gave in; and thus, curiously enough, the indigo-planter got off.

What struck me particularly in the court was that, though the show was a good one, the ends of justice did not seem to be fully attained. The interpretation was execrable. What the witness said was very seldom correctly rendered, and many things were put into his mouth which he did not say. The cross-examination of counsel seemed also often to be very irrelevant: but the counsel had certain privileges which they fully asserted, and would

not allow to be interfered with. There was a passage of arms between the judge and the counsel on this very point.

"You have been over and over repeating that question, Mr. Twigg. I don't see what you want to elicit. It seems to me that you are taking up the time of the court quite unnecessarily."

"I beg pardon, my lord. But the question has been repeated so often very advisedly."

"You may think so; I don't: and I really cannot allow this to go on."

"Your lordship must excuse me. We have our respective duties in this court to discharge. Mine is to defend my client, and if by repeating any particular question I can throw one spark of light to clear him of the imputations made against him, I am bound to do so. And I hardly need remind your lordship that it is your lordship's duty and that of the jury patiently to receive the evidence as it crops up."

"Very good, Mr. Twigg; you may go on."

So the counsel had the best of it, and the judge was obliged to cave in.

As a rule the jurymen also were ill-chosen. Often, very often, native jurymen betrayed strong prejudice in favour of native offenders when belonging to the higher or middling classes; much oftener still, Christian jurors openly exhibited their strong bias in favour of Christian culprits; and the right he had of challenging jurors rendered it almost impossible for the court to convict an offender who was ably defended, as practically the choice of his judges was left with him.

In other respects, however, the court exercised a very salutary influence, especially in checking the irregularities

of the police; and some judges took a delight in taking the officers of the police to task for any cause or no cause at all, of which the following is a veritable instance. The names of the jurymen having been called, the judge observed that the number of absentees was very great, and he fined the absent jurymen Rs. 20 each.

"My lord, I am present in court," bawled out one jurymen. "My name was not correctly called out by the Clerk of the Crown, and I did not answer, thinking that some other person might be meant. If I (giving his own name) was intended, I trust your lordship will, under this explanation, remit the fine."

Mr. MacTurk, the Deputy-Superintendent of the Police, here nudged the jurymen, and told him in whispers that he must move through counsel.

"My lord, Mr. MacTurk, the Deputy-Superintendent of the Police, tells me that I must move through counsel; but as I am attending the court as a jurymen, your lordship will perhaps kindly hold that to be unnecessary."

Now, the judge, an irate man, was looking round like a mad bull, uncertain whom to gore. Was he to toss up the Clerk of the Crown, or the juror? Neither; the juror had found out the scarlet man for him.

"Mr. MacTurk, the Deputy-Superintendent of the Police," roared out the judge, "had better mind his own business, which I have observed on divers occasions is very ill performed. He has nothing whatever to do with my court and my jurors, and I beg that he will interfere with neither."

The silence in the court was profound. All eyes were turned on Mr. MacTurk at once, but the ground had opened under him, and he had disappeared. Something

the judge said to the Clerk of the Crown in an undertone which was not audible at any distance. The juror thereupon quietly elbowed up to the Clerk, and asked him if his fine had been remitted.

"Yes, yes; you are very troublesome, Báboo. I shall take good care that you are not summoned again."

And long did the juror bless his own temerity that had earned such coveted exemption.

CHAPTER XI.

DRUNKARDS AND DRUNKENNESS.

THE vice of drunkenness has been making very considerable progress within the last five-and-twenty years. I do not mean to say that a quarter of a century before there were few drunkards. There were a good many even then ; but there are a great many more now. Among my office-mates of those days, say out of a hundred men, I could count only about ten who drank at all, and of these two only were drunkards. A similar reckoning now would give fifty per cent. of drinkers, and at least eight or ten per cent. of drunkards.

I hate a drunkard. I hate even what cant calls moderate drinking. There is doubtless a great deal of truth in the saying that the good things of life are to be used, not abused. But I don't see that it can be made applicable to drink, not being able to understand that wine and spirits are "good things" in the sense in which those words are generally understood, any more than ammonia, arsenic, and aconite. Very good medicines, but not very good "things" any of them, I think. I don't want, however, to moralise. I want simply to describe the drunkards I have known.

The variety is very great ; or rather the effect of wine and spirits is very different on different men. One will take his whole bottle of brandy, or one bottle and a half,

(for these are the modern Bengali drunkard's usual doses,) very quietly, till he is fairly mastered, and finds his way into the gutters. Another will commence to become vehement before a quarter of a bottle has gone down, and wax more and more so as the doses increase, one whole bottle often failing to get the better of his fury. Of course both fellows are awfully disagreeable ; but the latter much more so. The first only harms himself; the other, every one that comes within his reach. I cannot conceive of anything more villainous than for a man, knowing his foible, to go to the bottle again as before, and then to abuse father, mother, wife, and children. Nor do they stop with abusing. Smash everything, whether it be a child's or a wife's head, a glass-caso, empty bottles, or an earthen *hundy*; smash everything and everybody that comes in the way. Behold the drunkard's jubilee !

Is Báboo Oghore Náth come to office to-day ? O, yes ; there he is : but he is high seas over yet, and will not be able to do any work. Has Rájendra Báboo come ? No : he has been breaking all the furniture of his house last night ; his wife has had a narrow escape ; somebody else's bones were broken ; his own hands and feet have been cut awfully, and he cannot come for some days. Now, should not some one have summary jurisdiction to prescribe a good dose of shoe-beating every time this occurs ? A shoe-beating, mind, is the only treatment that effects a radical cure. There is no other remedy ; and to my knowledge a good shoe-beating has never failed.

But how does the vice spread ? It is so loathsome in its best phases, and the liquid-fire is so hard to swallow, that one would think the infection would never catch. It does catch, though ; and there are hoary villains who make it a trade to find recruits for the d—l's regiment.

42 *REMINISCENCES OF A KERÁNI'S LIFE.*

An old fellow of my acquaintance, and, sooth to say, a well-educated man, who once held a very respectable office under the Government, having drunk out all his substance and pawned his soul to the arch-fiend, has to my knowledge been very assiduous in ruining others. Young men—younger, in fact, than his sons—were the victims chosen ; the cloak assumed was friendship—great disinterested friendship—a real liking for the children—strong desire to do something for them in life—to introduce them into the highest circles, etc. ; all springés to catch woodcocks, and the woodcocks were caught. I don't know how the old scoundrel was benefited. He, of course, made himself a beast, as often as he liked at the youngsters' expense ; but that was all he gained. In the d—l's service men work very zealously on the smallest pittance; God's service requires more substantial bribes.

CHAPTER XII.

OTHER BAD HABITS, AND THEIR CURE.

“Poor rule that won’t work both ways,” as the boy said, when he threw back the rule at his master’s head ; and so the drunkard may say that all our philippics against drunkenness will tell just as well against other habits with which the bottle has no necessary connection. There certainly was one man among my office-mates, who neglected his wife and children as much, or more than, the drunkards I have named. He drew a decent pay, but not a pice of it went home. Friends told his wife to complain to the Burrá Sáheb, and she did so.

“Now, Jagga-náth, what do you do with all your seventy rupees ? Your wife writes to me that you don’t pay her a pice, and she has to beg for her living and that of the children.”

“O no, sir ; she has not to beg for it at all, sir. My brother supports her and the children.”

“But why should your brother have to support them when you are so well able to do it yourself ?”

“I am not well able to do it, sir. My pittance of seventy rupees scarcely keeps me afloat.”

“How is that ? I thought seventy rupees to a man in your position was a good income. What does your brother earn ?”

“Little enough, sir—”

"Don't try to blind me, now; let me know precisely what his pay is."

"Seventy-five rupees, sir."

"And what family has he got?"

"A wife and child."

"Then his seventy-five rupees support six souls—himself, his wife and child, and your wife and two children; while your seventy rupees are scarcely able to meet your wants. How do you account for that?"

"Ah, sir! All men have not like wants—"

"Well, Jaggañáth, you ought to be thoroughly ashamed of yourself; and now mind, if out of your seventy rupees you don't pay thirty rupees every month either to your wife or to your brother, for the support of your family, I shall strike out your name from the establishment list."

"But, sir, I can't do it."

"You can, sir, and must. I shall make you do it."

Now, what should be done to a man of this stamp, who, for the "bought smile of a harlot," sacrifices health, money, and domestic happiness, making life a burden to those whom he is bound by laws, both human and divine, to support and relieve? Here also, a course of shoe-beating would be the best cure. Our forefathers understood this, and administered the medicine in sufficient doses to keep the family in order. But those patriarchal rules have long lost their force. Even fathers and guardians cannot now take the law into their own hands, and the consequence is unmitigated misery all round. There should be some one authorised to deal summarily with cases like these. The legal process of applying for maintenance and all that is too uncertain; and besides, it does not cure the patient. I view both drinking and a bad life in the light of violent diseases which require violent treatment. My faith in the efficacy of the cure I have named is

deep-rooted. The difficulty is in getting a doctor to administer it.

The word "doctor" draws out a chain of new ideas on the subject. Do not several of our doctors (I mean our Bengali doctors) aid and abet the offenders—both by precedent and example? I speak only of matters personally known to me. I felt sick myself and sent for a doctor—a countryman of mine. The complaint was a bad stomach, bad digestion, occasional pains.

"O," said the doctor, "no medicine is necessary. Take cocoa-nut milk—one entire cocoa-nut—after every meal, or take a bottle of beer."

"But why beer, doctor, if cocoa-nut milk will do as well? The cocoa-nut will come cheaper and never make me tipsy."

"What! are you afraid of getting tipsy, or have you really conscientious objections to the beer?"

"Very conscientious objections indeed, unless it be absolutely necessary."

"Then the cocoa-nut will do just as well, perhaps better. But nine people out of ten would have preferred the beer."

Doubtless they would, and therefore should the doctor be more wary in naming it. His is a high avocation, and he should not pander to the evil-angel if he can help it. If the beer be necessary, of course it is right that he should say so. But when such a harmless thing as the cocoa-nut will do as well, it ill becomes an educated man and a gentleman to suggest the use of that less harmless alternative which the giddy-pated are sure to prefer. We all have responsibilities in life. One unthinking word may light up a conflagration which all the waters of a whole river will not quench. I did not say all this to the doctor; but the thoughts occurred to me.

CHAPTER XIII.

FORGERY TRIALS.

A CASE of forgery has come up before the police magistrate, Mr. Bully, and my evidence is wanted. A Mr. Impudence has forged the signature of his brother, Mr. Stanley Impudence, the well-known aristocrat. I happen to know Mr. Stanley Impudence's signature, and am hauled up before the magistrate to say what I know.

"Your name is so and so? You are employed in the Government Treasury?"

"Yes."

"Do you know the signature of Mr. Stanley Impudence?"

"Yes; pretty well."

"Pretty well' won't do. I must have clear and definite answers."

"I know it very well then, your worship; exceedingly well."

"How do you come to know it so well?"

"In the course of business."

"Do for goodness' sake explain what you mean by such an indefinite expression as 'the course of business,' which may mean anything or nothing."

"I have seen Mr. Stanley Impudence sign papers in my presence very often, and have observed the signature carefully."

"Just look at the signature attached to this document. Do you recognise it as Mr. Stanley Impudence's signature?"

"No."

"The name is correctly written?"

"Yes."

"But it is not the signature you know?"

"No, it is not."

"Is it like Mr. Stanley Impudence's signature?"

"No; there is an attempt at imitation, but not a successful one."

"You would not pay money on that signature?"

"No, I would not."

Here my evidence terminated. Similar evidence of others was taken, and then the case was sent up to the sessions. Mr. Bully was an excellent magistrate, but he liked to have scenes in his court: he was an old player who had not given up his stage tricks on being promoted to the bench, and so he continued to act on to the end of his life. Our evidence in the case would not have been required, but that Mr. Stanley Impudence, who had refused to pay the forged cheque, did not appear to give his testimony about it; expecting, perhaps, that his brother might escape the clutches of the law if he kept back. My evidence and that of others who deposed to the same effect removed this hope, and Mr. Stanley Impudence, putting the best face on the matter, came forward at the sessions to deny his signature. Our testimony was therefore not taken at the sessions trial, but we had to attend all the same, lest friend Stanley should shy back.

Mr. Stanley Impudence and I were old acquaintances; but he cut me at the court, I suppose for the evidence I had given against his brother at the police. He stared

me in the face ; but I out-stared him. There was no chance of Mr. Stanley Impudence getting over me in that way. His brother was convicted and transported.

I saw another trial for forgery at the same sessions—the culprit in this case also being a European and of respectable connections. The Judge personally knew the prisoner and his friends in England ; he said so in passing sentence on him. As there were no extenuating circumstances, he was obliged to pass the usual sentence of transportation, and the prisoner left the dock in hysterics. His friends afterwards succeeded in procuring a remission of a portion of the punishment, the local Government having the power to grant such remissions. Perhaps the young man deserved this kindness—perhaps he purchased it by his good behaviour. A similar recommendation in favour of a native offender—Sibkissen Banerjee—was not acceded to. I don't mean to say that Sibkissen deserved any show of kindness ; but the recommendation on his behalf was based on equally good grounds—namely, age and good behaviour since transportation.

CHAPTER XIV.

ASSAULT AND BATTERY.

It is past 3 p.m.; some ten minutes after the time when the Treasury ceases to receive or pay money. An English woman (look at her bloated face and squalid dress; you cannot call her a *lady* even out of courtesy) runs in with a bill due at sight, and insists on its being paid. The *ámlíh* are unable to comply, and she is referred to the Burrá Sáheb; but she has run out of breath, and is unable to go up. Go up she does at last; but the Burrá Sáheb is very sorry that he cannot help her.

“It is only ten minutes after three o’clock.”

“Yes, just ten minutes too late.”

“But surely you can pay me now quite as well as you could have done ten minutes earlier?”

“There must be *a time* to stop. If I pay you now, and another person comes to me five minutes after, how can I refuse him?”

“Mine is an exceptional case, Mr. ——; I am a lady.”

“I am quite unable to accept the case as an exceptional one.”

“You are very unaccommodating. I expected greater civility from you.”

“Mrs. Horne, you are forgetting yourself.”

In great sulk the woman withdrew from the Burrá Sáheb's room. The cause of her importunity was soon made apparent. An old money-lender had lent her some money some months before. Neither money nor interest had yet been paid, and he had been put off for weeks and months. He then threatened to bring her up before the Court of Requests (now called Small Cause Court), and this she was anxious to prevent by paying down the interest at once. The bill had been shown to him, and he was willing to receive the interest in part-payment without resort to law.

"Well, Mother Horne! have you got the money?"

"No, you stupid. Those fellows here refuse to pay me to-day."

"But I must have my money immediately. I have many dues of my own to pay."

"Then go to h—ll and get the money. You don't get any from me."

"I must get from you. You have put me off from day to day. You must pay the interest this evening, or I shall pass on to the Court of Requests."

"I shall prevent you from doing that; I shall make you lame;" and, no sooner said than done, she gave him a tremendous kick with one of her elephantine legs. The poor old man fell down much hurt. The bystanders took him up and helped him to the Burrá Sáheb's room, to lodge a complaint.

"What can I do for you, old man? I can't interfere in the matter. You should go to the police."

"But, sir, she kicked me in your Treasury, and I complain to you. What else can I do? She is a lady."

"I don't know what you can or cannot do. She is not a lady. If you had returned the kick, I would not

have interfered. A woman that misbehaves in such a manner is not entitled to the privileges of her sex. But I cannot help you, old man. You must go to the police." He did go there ; but the police inflicted a nominal fine only.

There was another case of assault and battery within a short time after. A great Báboo—a millionaire—had come to the Treasury for interest due on his Government Promissory Notes. His carriage was standing at the door. An English gentleman comes soon after in his buggy, and tells the coachman to drive forward. This the pampered servant of a millionaire won't do. The Englishman gives him a whipping. The Báboo's *durmáns* and *syces* surround him, and the Báboo himself runs out to the landing-place.

" You beat my coachman ? Who you ? Why you beat my coachman ? " The gentleman tried in vain to explain to him that the coachman was to blame in not clearing out from the landing-place.

" I see you in the police. Why you beat my coachman ? You know who I ? "

" Don't make a scene here, Báboo. If you want to go to the police I have no objection. But ask other gentlemen—ask the Báboos in the Treasury—everybody will tell you that the landing-place must be left clear for the last arrival."

" But why you beat my coachman ? tell me that ; " and so it went on for some time, till cards were exchanged, and then counter-actions were brought in the police. Of course, Lakhapati Báboo came off second-best.

Unfortunately, these illiterate Báboos represent all native gentlemen in the estimation of Englishmen. They are insolent themselves, and teach their servants to be

insolent. A part of the whipping that the coachman received might have been advantageously administered to the Báboo himself. The arrogance of Lakhapati Báboos sadly requires a cure. Education has done nothing for them ; they have received no castigation at school ; a little whipping now and then would be of inestimable service to them.

CHAPTER XV.

UGLY MISTAKES.

I NEVER received any reproof in the office but twice ; once when I made a mistake myself, and the other time when I corrected one made by the Chotá Sáheb. It was on this last occasion that I learnt for the first time that men in authority make no mistakes. It was a glaring blunder that I had pointed out. A debit entry had been made on the receipt side of the account sheet, and the totals of course did not square. All the items had been checked one by one, but as the amounts had agreed, the entry on the wrong side of the account had not been detected. More than an hour had been lost in this way by the Huzoor, when, partly by guess and partly by intuition, I laid my finger at once on the item which required to be expunged from one side and taken over to the other. The Chotá Sáheb was furious. He at first maintained that the entry was perfectly correct, and that my suggestion betrayed but little knowledge of accounts. I took the rebuke quietly, and by deducting the amount from one side of the account and adding it to the other showed that the totals came right.

“ What then ? That did not prove that a receipt was not a receipt ? ”

"No; but an examination of the voucher will show whether the amount was a receipt or a payment."

"I did examine the voucher when I made the entry. Surely you don't mean that I make these entries at haphazard?"

"Of course, I don't mean that. What I mean is that, in the hurry of business, the entry that was intended for the payment register was made in the receipt register."

"Absolutely impossible! I would consider myself unfit for any work if I made such a mistake."

By this time other assistants had been going through the vouchers in the file, and, the one required having been found, it proved that my surmise was correct.

"I must have been very stupid at the time," said the Chotá Sálícb, "to have made the mistake. But how is it that you could not detect this sooner? You have been going over the account sheets with me for the last two hours. I, as having made the wrong entry, was not likely to discover the error; but you, as a looker-on, ought to have found it out at once."

"It always takes some time to determine in what way a mistake of the sort would occur. It is difficult to detect such an error immediately."

"Not difficult at all, I should say. If I were a looker-on, I could place my hand on it without the least delay. I would do so by intuition. No great knowledge of accounts is necessary to find out a blunder like this. Your wits are not so sharp now as they used to be."

It was useless contesting the point further with such a man. Instead of thanking me for finding out his error and relieving him of further trouble in the matter, he

seemed to take a pleasure in blaming me for the delay in making the discovery, as if that exonerated him from the fault of having made the mistake. I therefore kept quiet, accepting the reproof as one of the many disagreeable but inevitable attendants of subordination. It is little evils of this nature that make service so unpleasant. They are not, it is true, of every-day occurrence, but they leave an impression on the mind long. A very great amount of forbearance and philosophy is necessary to override the petty evils of life.

I detected another more serious error of a different kind on another occasion; but this was an error committed by an office-mate, and the detection of it not only brought thanks but a handsome treat to the whole office. In paying a demand of Rs. 25,000, a brother-cashier, intending to pay it in five-hundred-rupee notes, had by mistake paid out 50 notes of Rs. 1000 each. The mohurer who assisted the cashier had also by mistake entered the notes as five-hundred-rupee pieces, but my eyes were caught by the borders of the notes (bank-notes of different values bore different border-marks), and I at once saw that something was going wrong; so I took the notes out of the mohurer's hands just as he was about to make them over to the payee, detected the error, kept back half the number, and had the necessary alterations made in the number-book. The cashier was ignorant of all this at the time; the secret was kept between the mohurer and me, the surplus notes being retained in my possession. In the evening there was consternation and dismay, for notes to the value of Rs. 25,000 were missing. The cashier was an elderly man, and I did not like to keep him long in suspense and misery, though I was advised by others to procrastinate. The notes were produced

and placed in his hands. The old man was in ecstasies, and a treat to the whole office on Sunday following proved substantially the sincerity of his thanks. I allude to this matter only to juxtapose the conduct of the Chotá Sáheb with that of a "nigger of niggers"—an old Bengali.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FREAKS OF FORTUNE.

THE wheel of fortune always goes round ; but have we no hand in guiding it ? Good fortune, I believe, is providential : we are often in luck's way, in spite of ourselves. But for bad fortune, who generally is more to blame than he who suffers from it ? One old man took service in the Treasury on a salary of six rupees. Six rupees in those days was not quite so insignificant a sum as now, and yet it was small enough. Four rupees was peon's pay, and six rupees was barely above peon's grade ; so that the man who did accept it, if of higher status, was undoubtedly of straitened means. This man that I was speaking of was of a good but poor family. In childhood a childless man of means adopted him, and dying left him, when he was about twenty years old, a small but decent fortune of a little above Rs. 10,000. No sooner did the money come into his hands than he began to think how it could best be spent. The idea of keeping it and living on it never occurred to him. Advisers are never wanting when there is substance to swallow. Some suggested convivial parties, others Ma-chooá Bazaár company, and interested parties gifts to Bráhmans and the like. But the young heir was an original genius, and had a hobby of his own to ride. He had seen tigers in menageries ; he wanted to see how

the lord of beasts stalked in his native woods at large. No sooner thought of than it was done. The idea was too bright and original to sleep upon. Boats were procured and manned with *páiks* and *shikáris*, and an excursion undertaken through the creeks of the Soonderbuns. A large party had to be taken, because those creeks in past days were (and, perhaps, now are) infested by robbers; and the trip was a somewhat prolonged one, as the felino monarch was not disposed to be very obtrusive. At last, after much bush-beating, a whelp somewhat larger than a pariah dog was seen—only for a moment, for he ran off to the higher jungles on becoming conscious of the proximity of man. The heir to another's fortune of Rs. 10,000 was highly delighted; the one wish of his heart was now fully satisfied. His dream of dreams was realised; but the money had also slipped out, and he came back to the poverty in which he was born, and from which even Providence had tried in vain to rescue him. The subsequent history of his life was that of a constant struggle for the necessities of existence, till in his old age he was obliged to enter the Treasury on the pittance I have mentioned, to discharge the duties of a subordinate *sircár*, scarcely distinguishable from those of a menial servant.

Another assistant of the Treasury whom I would here immortalise was a broken-down *poddár*, who in the hey-day of his life had made a good deal of money by his profession, and more especially by the purchase of stolen goods. But what Satan helped him to, he also helped him through. The wealth thus acquired was spent in a manner equally, if not more, disreputable. He was a man of the old class, and not addicted to liquid-fire; but he liked his *chillum* of *gánjá* and *churus*, and in his old

and placed in his hands. The old man was in ecstasies, and a treat to the whole office on Sunday following proved substantially the sincerity of his thanks. I allude to this matter only to juxtapose the conduct of the Chotá Sáheb with that of a "nigger of niggers"—an old Bengali.

CHAPTER XVII.

A NEW BURRÁ SÁHEB.

"WHEREVER you see a head, hit it," was the advice of some son of the Emerald Isle to his English friend on introducing him to a regular Tipperary row. I have been trying to follow the advice to the best of my power, and have been hitting at every head right and left about me, without, however, doing aught in malice ; and, till I am better advised, I intend to follow this course.

We had a good Burrá Sáheb hitherto in the Treasury, but Burrá Sáhebs are not fixtures, and the delineation of one does not necessarily describe all others. My old friend was a pious Christian, and a proper man generally to serve under. His successor is a man of an altogether different stamp. He is nevertheless a crack financier, and one thoroughly fit for the high post which he has been selected to occupy, except in one respect only, which I shall proceed to explain. In the round of pleasures that he has gone through, he has come in contact with all sorts of scamps—brothers and cousins of his fair acquaintances, pimps and go-betweens, broken-down hotel-keepers and keepers of empty-houses, and what not ? All these people are of course beggars, loafers, or whatever else you may choose to call them. Their gay friend is now a great man at the Presidency, and he must

provide for them all ; and the old man is weak and silly enough to yield to their pressure. The former Burrá Sáheb had never perpetrated a jobbery in office, except in the one instance to which I have referred, when he appointed the son of a personal friend of his, a young and inexperienced fellow, to a post of great importance, in supersession of many experienced and deserving men. But the youngster in question was a respectable man, very respectably connected, and became in time a passable assistant. The new Burrá Sáheb filled up every vacancy as it occurred—not one or two, but a dozen—with men most disreputably connected, who never could make good assistants, but whose claims on him were such as he could not set aside. This caused great dissatisfaction in the office ; but of course Burrá Sáhebs are not expected to care much for that. Is this an isolated picture of one high officer in one particular office only, or will the cap fit others ? Keráuidom would answer the question fully if it could venture to speak out.

One of the assistants of the office had a small parcel containing books to send to England. It had been packed carefully in tin and covered over with wax-cloth, when by accident it caught the Burrá Sáheb's eye.

"What business has that parcel in the Treasury?"

"None whatever," replied the assistant referred to.
"It has only come with me."

"What does it contain?"

"Books."

"What books? I must open the parcel, since I find it in the Treasury."

"I have no objection to your opening it, sir; only it will cost me a trifle to pack it up again, and I shall also

lose the present mail-steamer, as there would remain no time to repack it to-day."

"I don't care; it must be opened;" and he took up the parcel, and carried it with him into his own room. Shortly after the owner of it was sent for.

"Now tell me truly what the parcel contains?"

"Books only, as I have said before."

"What books?"

"I won't say that, because that is not my secret, but that of another person."

"But when I open the parcel I shall know."

"Open it then, and please yourself."

"But is there anything within to please? Why don't you name the books?"

"I could not without the permission of a third party."

"Am I right in thinking that you are packing off some dirty books or pictures to England?"

"You are completely in the wrong, sir. Books of that description come out *from* England *to* this country, and don't go out from this country anywhere."

"Is there anything within that would interest me in the slightest degree?"

"No."

"Well then, you may take away your parcel; but, mind, never bring such things into the Treasury again."

The man had, however, some good traits in his character. It is said he loved his wife to distraction, and went mad when she died. In a moment of temporary insanity he attempted suicide. His sirdár-bearer had suspected this, and stood concealed behind some almiráhs, and when the master's hand was raised to blow out his brains, the servant rushed forward and laid hold of it. In the scramble the pistol went off, but hurt no one. The

bearer secured a handsome pension for life. Very well, indeed, had he merited it! Call a “nigger” coward; it is the fashion to do so: but if this man was not brave (an unarmed man, attempting to disarm an armed madman), I do not know what bravery is.

CHAPTER XVIII.

APPOINTMENT OF A NEW DUFTRY.

A PETTY post in one of the departments of the Treasury had fallen vacant—viz. that of a *duftry* on five rupees. The candidates were many; a long line of Kháns and Meers stood ranged awaiting the arrival of the Burrá Sáheb, who wished to make the selection himself. During the incumbency of the former Burrá Sáheb there was a similar vacancy in the post of a *durwán*, with a similar parade of up-country athletæ. The selection in both cases was characteristic. The former Burrá Sáheb asked each man his name.

“Rámdeén Ojáh.”

“Ojáh won’t do; I don’t want a Bráhman.”

“Gugráj Doobay.”

“No Doobay for me: the same objection as to No. 1.”

“Mátádeen Tewáry.”

“I won’t have a Tewáry any more than an Ojáh or a Doobay.”

“Luchmiput Chowbay.”

“The same objection as before. All Bráhmans are bad men, and I won’t have any.”

“But why do you consider them to be bad men?” asked the Chief Cashier.

“O, it is a lesson of large experience. I have seen that wherever a rogue is taken up, he is sure to produce

his sacred thread ; and I have seen also that the natives present invariably take his side, and try to get him off."

" But that is only a rogue's trick. The rogue is not necessarily a Bráhman. He comes provided with a thread, simply that, if detected, he might be able to appeal to the religious prejudices of his countrymen, and thus secure a safe retreat."

" Be it so. Then the man who has his thread by caste-right would have all the greater hold on the sympathy of his countrymen. I do not want such a man. You there, what is your name ? "

" Lutchman Sing."

" Ah ! that will do very well. Sing means a 'lion,' I think. Well, I will have the lion. He is a good stalwart man, too. Let him be enrolled."

The present Burrá Sáheb drives in in his buggy. All the Kháns and Meers make their humblest salaám. He does not even look at the men.

" Just read over their names."

The names are read over. One, two, three, four ; he shakes his head in disapproval. The name of the fifth is Shaik Baichoo.

" Stand forth, Baichoo ! Have you worked anywhere before ? "

" Yes, Huzoor ; in the Buxy Kháná for two months."

" Very good, that will do. Let him be appointed."

Baichoo's maternal uncle is a " Hánz," who made a pilgrimage to Meccá, and now keeps an empty-house in Chunam Gully.

The subject stinks ; and the reader has had enough of it already. The Burrá Sáheb works very hard, and, taken all in all, is not a bad office-master. When he does take the side of a worthy man he supports him thoroughly,

and no amount of opposition from higher quarters ever made him forego the side he had taken. To the public he is more accommodating than his predecessor. There is no precise adherence to three o'clock with him, and ladies and Lieut. Sabertashes always get their work done with great expedition. At the same time, he does not allow the public to crow over his subordinates. Some irascible son of Neptune had threatened to kick a *poddár* if his cheque was not attended to at once. The *poddár* reported the matter to the Burrá Sáheb, who told him not to pay the money till after everybody else was paid. Neptune Junior remonstrated. "I shall hand you up to the Government if you say another word," was the reply.

CHAPTER XIX.

SUNDRY MILLIONAIRES.

If I have hurt any one in the short but brilliant chapters I have written, let him send me a new *pugree* or *chogá*, and I shall forget the past. Such, in the words of Joe Miller, slightly altered, should be my answer to all Burrá Sáhebs and Chotá Sáhebs who may feel aggrieved at what I have written. The public at large I have generally treated respectfully, with occasional exceptions here and there. But there must be a few more exceptions in the pages to follow.

I remember that I have already described one millionaire. I can recall to mind many others whom I have known. One was a fat fair man, about forty years old when I first saw him, who fed well and dressed well—both in the native fashion—and was the owner of some ten lakhs of rupees, the interest of which he would come to the Treasury to receive. He did not know how to read and write, and, instead of signing his name, was content to put down his x mark. Bless me! he did not know even how to speak. To every question he smirked in reply, and the *sircár* at his side was obliged to explain what he meant. The man seemed to be very good-natured though, and I dare say accepted the evils of life resignedly. Even ten lakhs of rupees, with stupidity like his, would perhaps be regarded as an unbearable

evil by some people, and, if allotted apart from the good nature given to him, would perhaps make them mad. But he took the infliction very quietly ; ate, slept, and was merry in his own way, as an orthodox Hindu.

Millionaire No. 2 whom I remember was equally illiterate. He also, did not know how to read and write, and did not sign his own name ; but he was of the genus "Young Bengal," from the tassel of his cap to the tip of his boots, and always dined at Davy Wilson, the baker's.¹ The whole aim and end of existence to him were comprised in dressing smartly, dining at Wilson's, and driving out in the course to stare at ladies. Where he slept the d—l only knows. They say that Sibkissen Banerjee, the convict I have referred to in a previous chapter, once gave him a smart whipping, because he wanted to have the precedence of him somewhere. The place need not be named. Sibkissen was then in the height of his impudence, and the millionaire had the worst of it. He drank out his fortune, and left his widow a beggar.

Millionaire No. 3, when I knew him, was a young man—scarcely above twenty-five. He had been once at school, but had learnt nothing beyond being able to order hot tiffin from Wilson. The one sole object of his life was to have a new mistress every day, with wine and *tamáshá* in her company ; and each new day was an exact repetition of the days past by, with such incidental variations as chance brought about. Over the wine-bottle he bet with a chum that his companion for the day was the prettiest woman in the town. His friend maintained that he knew another who was prettier. A wager was laid. The two scarlet ladies were brought together ;

¹ Now known as the "Great Eastern Hotel."

their admirers retained their respective opinions; hard words were exchanged; the wine-bottle was triumphant; and the millionaire got well kicked. But he did not lose his friend for all that, the very slight disagreement between them, which only ended in kicking, being easily made up next morning. Are these overdrawn sketches? They are taken from the life, the names of the parties only being withheld.

Millionaire No. 4 was a Young Bengal in days past, but became an Old Hindu towards the termination of his career. He was a person of parts, and went through a splendid fortune, contracted debts, got cured of his follies, entered a profession, and amassed another fortune bigger than his old one. He all at once donned the appearance of respectability, made his poojáhs with great parade, and affected to be a representative man of the highest order. But he was old Satan himself under his clothes; kept a venerable pimp in his pay; cheated right and left, notwithstanding that he already possessed more money than he knew what to do with; and, finally, completed his misdeeds by leaving his son a beggar. He was the only rich man with a very cruel heart that I knew of. Just in front of the Treasury a poor coolie with a heavy load on his head fell down before his carriage; the driver pulled up; the carriage stood still, but only for two minutes, to allow the coolie to get up. The great man within was in a terrible passion; he ordered the porter to be well whipped; two or three cuts were given to him, when the bystanders—one or two European gentlemen from Spence's—interfered so vigorously that the coachman was obliged to desist.

Ah! my masters! This is a very bad world to live in, and a poor keráni sees very little to envy in those who

are placed above him—especially among millionaires, who make so much fuss in the world. An acquaintance of mine, who had a name at school, and joined the mercantile line when I became a keráni, is now a beggar in the streets, simply from having kept company with millionaires, and contemned all humbler fry. I would rather be a dog and cry “Bow wow” than go after a millionaire to be taken for a great man myself.

CHAPTER XX.

SCRIBBLING VINDICATED.

"Come, boys, let us leave off work and go to sawing wood," as the blacksmith proposed to his apprentices, who were grumbling over the task he had assigned them; or, as the farmer said to his hired men—"Let us play digging cellars by moonlight after the day's work is done." This is very good advice to follow, particularly for young men, who, if they are lazily inclined, are sure to go to the bad. Excluding office-hours, there is plenty of idle time hanging on most of us, and we must find occupation for them, or some other gentleman is sure to forestall us. Work! work! work! It is the condition of our existence, and we must abide by the condition manfully. Nothing is more painful or more tedious than to be idle, and nothing can be more dangerous.

To the above sage advice, which is not a very new one, I will add a sager maxim, which also has run many editions, that every man who minds his own business, without troubling himself about that of other men, can always create for himself plenty of work to keep him well employed. In this respect, an office-mate of mine set all of us a good example by selecting for himself the idle trade of a scribbler. Yes: the trade is called an idle one, and is so to this extent, that it brings no money to the till. But it never fails to find full employment for

those who seek it; and it carries with it its own reward—as well as its own punishment also! And so the person I refer to found it; and so others will who follow the good example. He began by tagging verses, and spinning out long yarns in prose, on all and every subject, merely to kill time; and long columns of prose and verse began to appear regularly, week after week, in the Saturday-evening papers with his full name attached to them, he being then at that ago when people fancy themselves to be unusually clever, and are particularly anxious to see their names in print. Of course his effusions were nothing to speak of; but he did not think so, and, besides keeping him well occupied, they did him the great service of introducing him to the public at large, which eventually was of some benefit to him. One or two very clever men, high in the public service, were pleased to see something in them, not exactly of merit, but of indications of future usefulness; and this encouraged the writer to go on, though young fellows like ourselves, who envied him vastly, lost no opportunity to disparage his efforts, irrespective of the private feeling which we felt was gnawing up our vitals. He was not, however, to be easily put out. His success increased with his years; and eventually the magazines and reviews were glad to accept his contributions.

This young fellow, like me, had no friends to push him on in life; but his scribbling did that for him which his so-called friends would not. The head-man of an Account-office, who had noticed his writings on several occasions, was pleased to think that he would do particularly well as an assistant in his department, where there was plenty of letter-writing; and from the chrysalis state of a Treasury-clerk he was at once converted into

a veritable keráni. Among the papers of recommendation produced by him was a letter addressed to "Douglas Bennett, Esq.," written by the editor of the best magazine of the day, advising the transmission of a cheque for a specified amount in payment of a particular contribution.

"Who is this Mr. Bennett?"

"I am Mr. Bennett, sir," was the prompt reply.

Mæcenas smiled, and the appointment given to the young man on probation was at once made *puccá*. O! how I envied his good fortune! and did I not teazo all my friends that I was not equally lucky? For weeks and months I screeched about like a madman, disparaging the merits of the man who had succeeded, and cursing Mæcenas who had failed to discover my superior worth. Such is friendship! Such is life! At last, as chance would have it, I too was successful, and, success curing envy, I bade adieu to the Treasury with hearty good-will, and joined my old office-mate in his new office, once more as a friend, under the respectable designation of an examiner, from which grade I was some time after promoted to that of a drafting-clerk.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE REGISTRAR.

-Now, then, for reminiscences of the Account Department, which I shall begin by introducing to the reader the Registrar of our new office, Mr. Milk-and-Water, a very agreeable gentleman—exceedingly fussy, but absolutely harmless. He did not understand any work himself, nor did he pretend to do so. In the struggle he had for bread, he tried his hand at everything, from indigo-planting to the occupation of a broker, but did not succeed in any. When put to his wits' end, he thought he would make the best of his stalwart person, and, with this view, entered the service of a gentleman high in the public service on a very small pay. Mrs. Percy soon took a liking for her husband's personal assistant, and when Mr. Percy died some years after, Milk-and-Water stepped into his shoes without any difficulty. A Civil Servant's widow always has many friends, and Mrs. Milk-and-Water had only to ask to get her new husband his present high post. Is not this a nice way of getting on in life? Only very few persons have the necessary qualifications.

I knew of another very similar case in which an East-Indian assistant on small pay got into the good graces of his master's wife, and associated with her after her husband's death. Here, there was not the same success in

life on the part of the lady's favourite, first, because the living together was a great scandal and drawback in itself, and, secondly, because the fellow had no ambition, being quite content to spend the lady's fortune (a very handsome one), which she, with a fatuity common under such circumstances, allowed him freely to squander. This man held a small post in a Government office. He died a sudden death, they say, in his sleep, while in the arms of the woman who loved him so dearly.

Well, Mr. Milk-and-Water's fitness for the post he held need not be further discussed. He did hold the post, and no man who had the good fortune to work with him ever complained of it. He knew his own shortcomings rightly, and never tried to lord his authority over those below him. Of course he was fussy—very fussy, as I have stated. How can the head of an office, who does not understand his own work, preserve the respect of his subordinates without being fussy? "Do this," "Do that," "Is the work done?" "Quick, please"—to assistants; and to the Burrá Sáheb (Chief Accountant)—"O! I shall see this done, sir," "This will be attended to at once," "The other work you will get in no time," was all he had to practise every day. With most Burrá Sáhebs this was enough. So long as the work was done, they cared little who did it; and inefficiency at the top is, as a rule, seldom a defect to note upon. It is inefficiency at the bottom, or towards the bottom, that is always critically observed. Occasionally, however, Mr. Milk-and-Water caught it, and I was an accidental witness of this on one occasion. The Burrá Sáheb had got very angry over something which old Milk-and-Water had not been able to explain. I do not know what the matter was. I had been simultane-

ously sent for about some other work, and only came in to hear the last part of the great man's rebuke.

"Mr. Milk-and-Water, I see you can't understand anything. You are absolutely fit for nothing, sir. Very well, you may go now."

After this my work was disposed of, and, when I came out of the Burrá Sáheb's room, I saw Milk-and-Water waiting for me near my desk.

"This is an office of humiliation," said he; "see to what a place you have come with your eyes open. I dare say you were much better off where you were before. But pray don't let this matter circulate like wild-fire among the assistants here."

"Certainly not; don't think me to be so indiscreet."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SHOE QUESTION DISCUSSED—SOME OFFICE-MATES
DESCRIBED.

IN the office to which I now belonged, the East-Indian element was very strong, much stronger than the native element, and the new appointments of myself and my friend were regarded by the former class as a poaching on their preserve. The fact is, the Burrá Sáheb who selected us had taken into his head the idea that the work of an Account-office could be done better by natives than by East-Indians, and we were especially selected to give his experiment a trial. The class of natives hitherto in the office belonged to the old school, though there were one or two among them worth more than they passed current for. Of the rest, one instance will suffice.

In going to the Burrá Sáheb, I of course always went with my shoes on. I was surprised one day to find another native assistant, of an equal status with myself, standing before the Huzoor with bare feet. When we both came out, he gave me a lecture on the disrespectfulness of my conduct in not taking off my shoes. I did not, however, see in what the disrespect consisted, and said that to my mind the disrespect was in going in with bare feet. This made him very angry, and he called together a committee of all the old native assistants of

the office, who were unanimous in condemning me. I refused, however, to accept this decision.

"Has the Burrá Sáheb ever asked any of you to take off his shoes?"

"No; why should he? or how could he, when we never gave him the opportunity to do so?"

"Is there any order, written or verbal, requiring that shoes should be taken off?"

"None of recent date; but there was such an order in times past."

"Which has now become obsolete?"

"Well, not exactly. People who want to show their respect for the Burrá Sáheb always observe it still."

"It is just there that we differ, my friends. You observe the practice as a mark of respect. That doubtless was the view taken of the matter many years ago, when the order you refer to was passed; but it has long ceased to be so regarded by civilised men. At this day, they regard bare feet as a studied mark of disrespect, and it is for that reason only that we never pull off our shoes now."

"But suppose the Burrá Sáheb were to take notice of your recusancy?"

"Of course if the Burrá Sáheb orders me to take off my shoes, I shall do it. But I don't expect such an order, any more than I expect an order to pull off my trousers; and, in the absence of absolute orders, I consider it more respectful to keep on both trousers and shoes, and shall continue to do so." They looked daggers at me, but I was not further molested.

The East-Indian assistants also were, for the most part, inimically disposed towards me; mainly because, as I have already stated, they thought that I had no business

to be in that office at all ; and, moreover, because I did not cave in to them as the other native assistants did. There were two exceptions among them, however, whom I cannot but remember with thankfulness. One was a literatus of some standing, who had made himself a name by his contributions to magazines and annuals. He welcomed me with open arms as a personal friend, though he had never known me before ; helped me with his experience in the office, whenever I had occasion for such assistance ; and proved himself every inch a gentleman, quite above every feeling of rivalry or class antipathy. The other was also an educated man, but not possessed of an equally good heart. He, indeed, sided with me, but only because I was the Burrá Sáheb's nominee, and he thought that the best and safest course for him to follow was to pull with the current with a good grace.

It is scarcely necessary to notice any more of my office-mates at this moment. They will doubtless, many of them, turn up in the course of the narrative, and I promise to depict each faithfully as he comes forward. As the Irish magistrate mentioned from the bench, I shall always take care neither to be partial nor impartial in dealing with them. I can say of them generally, what Johnson said of the Scotch—I don't hate them, nor do I hate frogs, though at times I am obliged to regard them as very unnecessary evils.

CHAPTER XXIII.

VISITORS AND OMEDWÁRS.

It will be understood from the notice I have taken of the treatment Mr. Milk-and-Water received from the Huzoor that the latter was not a man of a very even temper. He was nevertheless not a bad man : far from it ; taken all in all he was a very good man to work under, one who did his own work conscientiously, and always showed a liking for those of his subordinates who worked well. He took a particular fancy to me, gave me a room adjoining his own, and befriended me in divers ways on divers occasions. What he was most fond of was work —constant, unremitting work, without rest or respite ; and what he did not tolerate was being interrupted in his work. One day a smart young man, neatly dressed in Young Bengal fashion, with a new shawl turban and new patent-leather boots, came to see him. The usual glazed card was sent in, and the visitor sent for.

“Take a seat. What do you want ?”

“Come to pay my respects, sir.”

“Very good ; but what else ? Is there anything particular that you want to be done for you ?”

“Yes, sir ; give me an appointment, sir.”

“Why, Báboo, we are making no appointments now ; there are no vacancies to give away. But you can send in your application, stating your claims.”

"Yes, sir; but will you give me a good appointment in the Department; a fat, gazetted appointment, sir?"

"I really can't say anything at present. I shall submit your application, when I receive it, to the Governor-General for orders."

"Very good, sir."

"Good morning to you, Báboo."

"Yes, sir."

"You can go now; you see I am very busy."

"Yes, sir," again replied the Báboo, but without stirring from his seat.

"Do go, Báboo; will you?"

"Yes, sir," and he rose from his seat, but stood fast behind the chair.

"Well, what more do you want?"

"Nothing, sir."

"Then go, please."

"Yes, sir."

"My goodness! why don't you move?"

"Yes, sir."

Short Temper could hold out no longer. "Will you go or not?—*Qui hyc, Biúboó ko nek'il dayo.*"

This, the reader will say, was an ignoramus, demeaning himself as ignoramuses will. Yes, just so; but unfortunately these ignoramuses are very plentiful in every grade of life, and bring a bad name on all natives generally. A Deputy Magistrate, while in a boasting mood, related to me how he had forced himself *nolens volens* on the notice of a Judge of the High Court. He came to our office very early one morning, when I and a few other assistants only had dropped in.

"Hollo! Deputy Sáheb, what brings you here so

early? Has there been any difficulty in passing your salary, or any mistake discovered in your accounts?"

"O! neither; I have just dropped in on my way back from Garden Reach, where I went to see Mr. ——, the High Court Judge, at his residence."

"I suppose he receives visitors only in the morning?"

"Well, no; the fact is he receives no visitors at all. I called another day in the afternoon, and was refused. I asked his jamádár when the Sáheb was comparatively idle, and learnt that he did nothing in the morning besides reading the newspapers, but that even then he did not receive visitors. I was determined, however, to see him, and went this morning. I sent in my card, and what does he do but write on it—'On what business?' I replied—'To pay my respects.' The chuprássi brought back the usual reply—'*Phoorsut nehi háye.*' I did not know what to do. Shortly after I heard the Sáheb ordering his *ghárry*, and I waited for him at the landing-place. How was he to avoid me now? I stopped him just as he came down the staircase, and I kept him full one quarter of an hour standing there and talking to me. Nothing like perseverance, you know."

"But had you anything particular to tell him? Did you know him before?"

"No, I did not know him before; nor had I anything particular to say. But I make it a point to call on all these great folks, and make friends. You don't know when they may be of service to you."

Can a character more despicable than this be conceived? Mind, the man was a so-called educated man, and held an honourable post in an honourable branch of the public service.

The Huzoor of the Account Department never refused

to see any one. He had only no leisure for idle talk. Sensible visitors took the hint he always gave them. One idler, after a short interview, was told by him that he was very busy.

"I can call another day when you are less so."

"O, Báboo, I am always very busy."

This was enough for the person I refer to ; he never came again : but the hint does not operate on others in the same way. One brave Rájáh in particular vexed the Huzoor out of his life. Him he could not well turn out as he did all meaner fry, and the fellow took advantage of this and came to him very frequently—every time with a new favour to ask. He compromised me, too, with the Burrá Sáheb to some extent. Seeing that I sat by myself so near to the Huzoor, he took me for his especial favourite, and thought I might be able to help him ; so, after seeing the Huzoor, he made it a point to see me. While in my room, he would often become so uproarious in his mirth as completely to upset the Huzoor's equilibrium in the adjoining apartment, and the Huzoor thought me partly to blame for encouraging his visits ; though I, of course, could not have kept him out, even if I had tried to do so.

CHAPTER XXIV.

HUZOOR NO. 2, AND HIS FRIENDS.

THE Chief Accountant was a very good man; but Accountant No. 2 was the reverse. He hated natives, and was exceedingly foul-mouthed. I had nothing to do with him especially, the Burrá Huzoor having selected me as his personal scribe; and it was very fortunate that it was so, as I could not possibly have agreed with No. 2. He also had a favourite in the office, but that favourite was quite as afraid to approach him as anybody else; and even visitors were treated most rudely by him. My contiguity to the apartments occupied by the Huzoors enabled me to note all that passed in his room. During some vacation or other there was a rush of Mofussil officers "come to pay their respects" to the Huzoors. They easily found admittance to the Burrá Sáheb for short interviews; but the case was very different with No. 2.

"Hám jántá háye. Sállá lok kí choote millú háye.
Bullo Sállá lok ko, hámárá phoorsut nehi háye."

Of course this was between the Sáheb and his peons. If he had dared to abuse the officers in their hearing, he would have surely caught it, as doubtless some one or other would have had the courage to hand him up to the Government, and abuse is the last thing that the Govern-

ment will tolerate. If I remember aright, some Mofussil officer was for such offence degraded and warned.

The friends of our No. 2 were also apparently of the same feather. One of them, in coming up the staircase, was accosted by a clerk of the office by mistake as a brother-assistant, with the cordial "Hollo! Robinson," and a slap on the shoulder. The Sáheb was running up the staircase while the assistant was running down, and they found themselves looking at each other with very different feelings when one was at each extremity of it. The assistant had already discovered his mistake, but was puzzled and did not know what to do. If he had only run up and apologised, there would have been an end of the matter. This he did not, and the irascible Sáheb, not receiving the apology he was expecting, ran downstairs, chased the assistant all over the first floor of the office, and gave him a tremendous caning. I don't blame the Sáheb much for this, for he was a young man then, and hot-blooded: but it ought to have occurred to him that the man who had slapped him on the shoulder as an office-mate could have had no object in doing so purposely, and must have done it by mistake. Fortunately for the Sáheb, the assistant he fought with was a short, puny fellow, who accepted the thrashing quietly. The result might have been different if he had had a hardier man to deal with, and therefore was the Sáheb's action exceedingly indiscreet.

CHAPTER XXV.

SUCCESS IN OFFICE, AND OUT OF IT.

SHIRK work is the great secret of an account office, as probably of all other offices also ; and when the head-man, like the Registrar I have described, does not understand his business, this is easily done. My cue from the commencement was to take up as much work as others chose to shirk, and I never had cause to regret it. Of course it was painful to be constantly grinding away, when others equally placed had plenty of leisure and holiday. But the day of reckoning came. - The Burrá Sáheb saw what I did ; the experiment he had taken in hand had fully succeeded ; and I was rewarded to an extent for which there was no precedent. Then arose a cry of rage and disappointment from all sides, and this took the shape of a round-robin remonstrance addressed to the Huzoor by all my seniors, some nineteen in number, whom I had superseded. But they had mistaken their man altogether. The Burrá Sáheb sent for all the recusants, returned their remonstrance to them, and said that, if it was not forthwith withdrawn, he would be under the painful necessity of dismissing the whole of them at once. Of course all this tumult did not make me a favourite in the office ; but my success, such as it was, quite reconciled me to the discomfort of my lot. This, however, was the only promotion I ever received for

many years, and, though I was never actually superseded, I saw people on all sides of me afterwards getting on better in life, and never could understand how I came to be left in the lurch. One thing I never did—I never cringed to any man for a favour.

The experiences I had in this office are of a varied character. Those who got out of it, I found, generally fared well in life ; but those who stuck to it stuck in the mire. One European assistant left the office and became a horse-dealer in Australia, made a fortune there, lost the whole of it again, came back to the office, left it once more for Australia, where, when I last heard of him, he was said to be doing excellently well. Another European assistant was sent away for some fault, and became a tea-planter, and then an indigo-planter, and is now said to be worth some lakhs of rupees. A third assistant, an East-Indian, joined the Police Department, where he is doing exceedingly well. A fourth gave up his appointment to join his father's business of a hotel-keeper at a distant sanitarium, and is said to be worth plenty of money now. A good many others were pensioned off, of whom one has become a man of substance by private enterprise ; another is doing still better by service under other masters, his perquisites being greater than his pay ; while a third is fighting with his wife, with whom he has all along been living a cat-and-dog life. Of the native assistants, one went out with a fat appointment to the Mofussil, where he has earned well-deserved honours ; another was most fortunate in obtaining a fatter appointment in Calcutta, to which he is still attached ; a third, who held a very petty post in the Account Department, set off on a fortune-hunting expedition on his own account, was taken in favour by some silly up-country

Ránee whose faith in a Calcuttá Báboo happened to be implicit, fleeced her and her minor children handsomely, and came down laden with booty, the envy of gaping thousands ! A fourth and fifth have died, one in the prime of life, both exceedingly regretted by those who knew them.

CHAPTER XXVI.

BÁBOO MÁDHUB DUTT.

THE office building was private property. It belonged to a millionaire, who used occasionally to call over personally to inspect it. I have immortalised a good many millionaires already in these pages, but this man was of so different a stamp that I am induced to foist him in also. We did not know each other personally before ; but he came and introduced himself as well-acquainted with the seniors of my family. He was an old gentleman of very unostentatious manners ; I may say, having about him almost the simplicity of a child. The race is dying out. We find very few men like him now. Of him an excellent characteristic story is told. He had a good bazaár which brought him a handsome income. Another rich Báboo set up a rival bazaár in the neighbourhood, with a view to break up the old bazaár. It is said of my millionaire that he thereupon went over personally to his own bazaár, and there accosted each dealer and fish-wife thus :

“ You see I am an old man—a very old man. You are all my children. I have two children at home ; but all the rest are here. Will you desert me, my children, in my old age ? Has your father deserved this at your hands ? If anything sits heavy on you, tell me of it and I will remove the oppression. Do you complain of any-

thing—any misbehaviour on the part of my servants—any shortcomings of my own?"

They one and all said that they had no grievances to complain of; they one and all swore that they would never leave their old father's protection for all the new bazaárs that might be set up. Each dealer and fish-wife then received as presents, in ratification of the contract, a new cloth and sweetmeats. The rival bazaár had to shut up within a week.

Poor old man! He had perhaps no enemy in the world, and yet was not this man murdered? Of course I allude to the well-known Mádhub Dutt, who was killed on his way to his house at Chinsuráh from the railway-station. The enigma of that story has not yet been explained. Justly or unjustly, suspicion looked askance in one particular direction; but no light whatever was thrown on the matter. It was supposed that one of his own *durváns* was the selected agent for carrying out the crime, and this man, it is said, was afterwards traced to Lucknow, where he joined the mutineers and died sword in hand. But did that one man do the deed alone? Were there no accomplices? The mysteries of the Calcuttá Police have yet to be unravelled.

The old man, as he came to me, had his *Námmálá* in his hand, which he pattered as he chatted on. He was very happy, he said, at home. Of his two sons, the eldest had died some years ago; and that was his greatest grief. But Providence had toned down his sorrow. He spoke of his surviving son with the greatest affection. Of himself, he said that he loved to live at Chinsuráh because the place was so much quieter than Calcuttá, and he wanted rest. Rumour had it that he was tied down to the spot by the silken meshes of an unorthodox love.

Poor old man ! Did he not pay too dearly for it ? It was when going to this lady-love that he was waylaid and murdered. By whom ? Will that ever transpire ? Years have passed over the crime. Is it yet to the profit of any man to leave the tale untold ?

CHAPTER XXVII.

CALIGRAPHY—ITS DECLINE.

A DEPUTY Magistrate, flaunting a gold chain, introduces himself. An old copyist—a wag of the first water—is looking admiringly at the chain, with great affected simplicity. The Deputy Magistrate is much flattered, and asks condescendingly if the old man likes the chain.

“O ! it is not that, sir ! The chain is good enough ; and the gold is very bright too. But I am looking at it so steadfastly because it explains the meaning of a word which I never understood before.”

“ What word can it be, I wonder ? ”

“ O ! a very simple word, sir ; or rather two words. At home, my youngsters, in conning over their spelling-book, constantly repeat the words,—‘ a he-goat,’ ‘ a she-goat.’ ”

“ Well, how do those words concern my chain ? ”

“ Why, sir,” asks the old man with the greatest simplicity in the world, “ is not this a he-gote, and a she-gote too ? Does it not answer as a *gote* (chain) both for yourself and your lady ? ”

The Deputy Magistrate was furious,—the copyist had run off.

The keráni referred to was a particularly impudent one, and presumed much on his age ; but he was also a very useful assistant. He was both copyist and draftsman.

A paper once came down to the office written in Arabic, which no one could read. Copies of the document were urgently wanted for circulation to Mofussil officers. This copyist, without understanding a single word of the language, made copies of the paper so exact that, when they were submitted to competent examiners for verification, not a single mistake was found in them. To do this, perhaps, did not require much intelligence; but it certainly did require great precision of hand to copy stroke for stroke, without overlooking the pettiest twist.

Of one assistant of the office—an East-Indian—it was said that a certain Governor-General, who wrote a very crabbed hand, having asked for a copyist who should be able to copy every letter correctly without understanding a single word, this man was selected, and did his work to his Excellency's satisfaction. For this qualification he drew a specially large salary, and when on a later day it was proposed to curtail the amount, he strongly protested against any reduction, urging clamorously that, though he did not understand much of accounts, he was the only assistant in the office who could copy correctly without comprehending the text! The plea was admitted, and the salary spared!

Some of the old copyists wrote an excellent hand. In this respect the falling off in later times has become very apparent. The old letters of the office were always written in splendid characters; but now-a-days the pot-hooks are scarcely readable. This is observable also in other documents. Just look at an old Government Promissory Note, or, as it is now the fashion to call those papers, an old "*Government Security*." The writing on it looks like copper-plate; but the Promissory Notes of

the present day have nothing like it to show. Even the signatures of the officers in past days—those of Messrs. Prinsep, Bushby, and Morley, for instance—were very clear and legible; while the signatures of the present time can scarcely be deciphered without a competitive reading examination among half-a-dozen men; and yet the papers used formerly to be signed by the highest officers of the Government, who did not consider it beneath their dignity to write a clear hand; while now, they are signed by mere Treasury clerks, who think it a shame to be able to write at all. I think that, like some millionaires I have mentioned, these gentlemen might simply put their mark on the papers with a \times cross, and some subordinate assistant might then write underneath “Mr. So-and-so”—“his mark.”

Then the old records of the Government offices, how beautifully they were kept! The same virtue of splendid handwriting is observable throughout them all. They are, page after page, quire after quire, ream after ream, unmarked by a blot or an erasure, and are always easily read without any pain to the eye. Printing has come to the rescue of the present generation, and all the printed records of every public office are of course very decent; but such records as happen to be kept in manuscript, how shabby they are! And yet the copyists of the present day are paid more, much more, liberally than were those of the past.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

PATRONAGE—HOW VACANCIES IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES ARE
FILLED UP.

A NICE appointment—that is, for an uncovenanted officer—has become vacant. There are many candidates for it—one among them *par excellence* the best of the whole lot, being a man of education, station in society, and much official experience. Another candidate is a very young man, of no official aptitude whatever, but very well connected, and personally known to Sir Henry Hardinge, with whose daughter he has danced in England! Will you bet who wins the prize? The man of parts was sanguine, but did not get it.

Take another case. A new appointment is created in an office where proverbially there is little work to do. The pay is handsome, and there are three candidates, two of whom would have graced any appointment. The third is illiterate, but has been of great service in diverse unofficial ways (*e.g.* in procuring loans of money and the like) to the officer who has the nomination in his hands. The merits of all the candidates are well known. The great man's nominee gets the post; the fact being that it was created for him, with especially fat pay and no work, the admission of other candidates being all a sham.

The reader may say that this has been so from the

commencement, and will be so to the end of time. Who knows of the golden age when it was otherwise ? True : but all this happens under the very nose of the Government ; the nose gets the stink, and only tries to keep it off with 'kerchief and Eau-de-Cologne ; the eyes are conveniently closed, the saint seems absorbed in prayer, and the thing is done. It would be a different matter if the Government were altogether ignorant of these doings ; but can it conscientiously plead that it is so ?

A third instance refers to an humbler appointment. An assistant applies for a vacancy in a higher grade. There are other applicants also, but he has long been recognised as the best of the lot. He goes to the head of the office for it, and is refused ; the claims of one of the other candidates being preferred.

“ Very good, sir ! But I have always had the toughest job to do, while the party preferred has had comparatively lighter and easier work. You have yourself said so on several occasions.”

“ Yes, you are right ; I have said so.”

“ Then I trust, sir, this will be mended now. Since he gets the promotion, it will be only fair to give him the more important duties.”

“ O ! that's my look-out, not yours. I always apportion work according to the capabilities of my assistants. The question of pay has nothing to do with that.”

It is useless multiplying instances. No deserving man in the public service can look above him without seeing many inferior people hoisted far beyond his reach. He may feel aggrieved, but must expect no redress. He may wince ; the withers of those in power are unwrung. One thing, however, he can do to regain his peace of mind. After looking up the ladder, he has only to look

down ; and, if his mind be at all well-regulated, he will at once see that there are many his equals, if not betters, occupying posts much lower than his own. The justice or the injustice of the thing need not be considered ; it is not open for discussion or deliberation. There is the fact staring us in the face, and we must accommodate ourselves to it in the best way we can. Mr. So-and-so has got ahead of you most unjustly. Admitted ; but similarly, you have got ahead of Báboos So-and-so, without possessing any higher qualifications. The beam will never get steady ; the scales are constantly vacillating.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE NEW REGISTRAR.

THE old Registrar Sáheb has gone out, and a new Registrar Sáheb has come in. Is he a better man? No; certainly not better in respect to work, and infinitely worse in all other respects. Were there no better candidates to select from? Lots of them; but it is needless trying to discover the why and wherefore of such *contre-temps*. A new broom must sweep. But he does not know what to sweep; so he sweeps away right and left, disorganising everything, without understanding what he does disorganise. Many alterations are made by him—all slap-dash, without judgment or forethought. The most valuable cheques are vetoed and prohibited—new ones are ordered which answer no useful purpose. A flaming account is sent up to the Chief Accountant of the improvements carried out; and the zealous broom is thanked in set phrase for having rescued the office from chaos and confusion. The whole world is a clap-trap, my masters, and we ourselves are the players in it!

Now, who is this new Registrar? A very busy and energetic man he is, whose pretensions include all sorts of accomplishments, without real claim to any. He has dabbled in Greek and Latín, and is master of English, Scotch, Welsh, and Irish. Persjan he pretends to; Arabic and Chinese he promises to learn. He sings

scraps of bawdy songs to exhibit his knowledge of poetry; mouths and gesticulates, and strikes the table very hard with his fists to show that he is an orator; and pretends to have taken lessons from my deceased friend, Rádhá Náth Sikdár, out of Laplace and Newton. It is sham throughout from top to bottom, and yet it is curious how men of education fail to detect the imposition. The man came out to this country with a wooden ladle in his mouth; entered some flourishing concern in the very humblest capacity; got on well enough there; pretended to have mastered the business; played his cards with great cleverness; and behold his wooden ladle is converted into a silver spoon—or you may call it golden without exaggeration.

“I will put you in the way; I will do everything for you,” mutters the deputy to his head, in the vain hope of ingratiating himself in his good graces.

“All right!” says the head, and makes over all his work to the deputy, and himself goes about gadding—to great people, to small people, and where not?

He remained in office long, very long indeed; and if he had only taken the pains to learn his work, he would have been worth something. But this he never did. He talked big, crowed loud, slapped the table hard, stamped with his feet, and cursed and swore by Sodom and Gomorrah. The *peons* and *dúftries* of the office quaked at these energetic demonstrations; even keránis of the lower grades got funky, while those whom his arm could not reach laughed at him; and yet this man had long, very long, the reputation of being a very efficient Registrar—a man who did not know anything of work, and whose whole secret of administration was brow-beating.

The deputy who assisted him soon found out his mistake. He had angled very adroitly for favour, but never secured it. He got disappointed and less zealous ; the head got disgusted and aweary, and the deputy was thrown overboard without the slightest compunction. But who was to do the work now ?—such mechanical duties as did devolve on a Registrar and could not be slurred over ? He got a *dewán* Báboo to do it—a member of that caste which, rightly or wrongly, has the credit of being the most intriguing and mischievous. The fellow acted both as deputy and spy ; they say that he did even worse, but of that I have no certain information. It is in this way that most people get on in life, Fools, and those who can't help it, work ; knaves get their work done by others, and simply draw their pay.

CHAPTER XXX.

DEMOCRACY AND SEDITION.

A MILITARY Officer held his office in the same building with the Account Department, and, as he had plenty of leisure, he took a delight in coming over and breaking a lance with me as often as he could find time for it. The manner in which we became first acquainted was rather unpleasant. He had taken a fancy to the small room which I occupied, had asked for it from our Burrá Sáheb, and came to turn me out.

"Well, Báboo, how long have you occupied this room?"

"Nearly a year now."

"But that has not given you any vested right to it, you know."

"Certainly not; do you want it?"

"Very much indeed; and what is more, Mr. —— has told me to take it. So it all depends upon you whether you will give it up or not."

"I would have given it up to you even if Mr. —— had not ordered it. I shall move out at once now, since he has told you to take it."

"O no! there is no particular hurry about it. You can move out when you like. I was obliged to speak to Mr. ——, because hitherto the room had belonged to his part of the office."

The acquaintance thus commenced he took great pains to cultivate; and in all the banter and provoking discussions we had, I always found him a perfect gentleman. He one day came and asked me what my duties were, tried to understand them, and then wanted to know what salary I received. All his inquiries having been answered, he coolly asked if I was not overpaid.

"Don't you think Rs. — too much for your duties?"

"Possibly, yes; taken in the abstract, the sum is large enough. But when I find that you are paid Rs. —, it then occurs to me for the first time that I am very much underpaid. Our duties are nearly similar; you have the military accounts, while I have those of the civil departments; and yet you get just eight times more than I do. Don't you think that to be somewhat unjust?"

The flush on his face was perceptible, but he covered it with a smile.

"I can get out a man from England," he said, "who would do your work for your pay."

"I have not the slightest doubt of it," said I; "but that would give no saving to the Government. I can nominate a native who will do your work for a fourth of your salary, or if the Government insists on having a European, I can at any moment pick out from the unofficial ranks a countryman of your own, who will fill your chair as efficiently at least as you do for half the amount you draw." This was a settler, and he ever after called me a democrat.

He came back to the charge when the papers announced the death of the Advocate-General, Mr. Ritchie. "Can you give us a native who would fill up Mr. Ritchie's place?"

"No. I don't know any native, or any European civilian, or military officer either, who could take up his duties."

"So you see your country can't give us the men we want, and we must get out fit men from England."

"Just so, and my country is willing to pay handsomely for any available talent that England can lend her. What she complains of is that she has to feed so many drones too in the bargain."

"Meaning me and the like of me, I suppose?"

"Not particularly; but there are parties whom the cap will fit."

"But you forget that we have conquered the country, and are entitled to everything in it as a matter of course."

"Possibly; but the country was lost by the Mahomedans, who had no inherent right to it. You did not fight the Hindus, and I contend that the Hindus have not forfeited their birthright."

"Ho! ho! Are you prepared to fight out for your birthright now?"

"Perhaps to say so would be treason; but when I hear every individual Englishman arrogating to himself the conqueror's right, and bragging of it, I am almost tempted to have a play at quarter-staff with him, if only to convince him that each Englishman by himself is not necessarily a conqueror."

"We don't fight with quarter-staffs; we fight with guns and swords, which you don't know how to handle."

"Only because you have schools to teach their use to you, but an enlightened Government has not thought fit to set up such schools in this country yet."

"But if you had the schools, do you think there would be many volunteers to learn the art of fighting?"

"I can't answer that question exactly now, but I should say that there ought to be many pupils. The English are protecting us with great kindness, but many people may nevertheless wish to learn to protect themselves. The occasion may arise when it would be of inestimable value to them."

"What occasion? Can you think of any?"

"Yes; England may get tired of the work of evangelising India, and may give her up altogether some day when we least expect it, and then we are done for, only because the Government will not allow us to learn the use of arms."

"O! you need not fear that England will give up India in a hurry."

"Then there is the possibility of her being compelled to do so."

"Indeed! All of you natives seem to think that Russia can take India at any moment from us; don't you?"

"I don't. I can't answer for others, but I don't believe that either Russia, or France, or America, or any other power whatever, can snatch India from England alone. One to one England is quite a match, and probably more than a match, for the strongest of them. But there may be a coalition against her, and then, with two or three strong nations opposed to her, no alternative would, perhaps, remain to her but to give up what she may not be able to retain."

"There is a deal of sense in what you say, but the purse of England is so long that of all powers in the world she has the least to fear from coalitions. No coalition against her could stand for six months; so you may rest quite satisfied that the protection of England

will not be withdrawn from you. Is there any other reason why you want to have a military school?"

"Yes; the reasons for it are as plentiful as wild-flowers on a prairie. A military school would enable us to stand by and be of help to the English in the hour of need."

"Or to join the rebels in the event of another mutiny? Eh!"

"You don't pay a compliment to Bengal. Bengal is too wide-awake for such folly."

CHAPTER XXXI.

ABOUT FARMING, AND THE MUTINY.

"I WONDER," said the Colonel, "that, with such notions as you entertain, you came to serve the Government in such capacity as that of a keráni."

"What else could I do? Englishmen do not seem to see that the field for selection for us is a very circumscribed one."

"Why, there are the professions open to you as to everybody else—Medicine, and the Bar."

"The higher grades in both are not quite open to us; or rather require a visit to England, which is not very convenient to everybody."

"Cultivation? Farming?"

"Yes; farming would pay handsomely. The thing is not understood in the country now, and if it were carried on fairly could not fail to be very remunerative. But you know the native objection to cattle-farming; we can't rear to kill."

"Fudge! nonsense! Why, my friend, at every poojáh —excuse me that I use strong words—you kill most unfeelingly and unnecessarily hundreds and thousands of cattle as hecatombs; and after that can you possibly feel any real compunction in slaughtering animals for the sustenance of human life?"

"You argue very strongly indeed. I cannot justify

the prejudice; but, like many other anomalies, it does exist, and therefore is cattle-farming impracticable for an orthodox Hindu."

"But you are not an orthodox Hindu, surely?"

"My seniors are, and I am bound to respect their feelings in the matter. Besides, if I did establish a good farm, would I not have many troubles along with it? Your indigo-planters have the bad name of making free with the crops of other people whenever they find it of advantage to themselves to do so. Will not European cattle-farmers of the same stamp rise up and try their hand at cattle-lifting on a wholesale scale?"

"Try their hand at cattle-lifting! Why, man, you threatened me with the quarter-staff the other day. Could you not make that ring in earnest on the head of a rival cattle-farmer? That is the way the Dandie Dinmonts settle such differences in my native land, and you must do likewise."

"Just so, and be perpetually in hot water, and perpetually bribing the *āmlāhs* of the law courts. The work would doubtless be very remunerative, but perhaps not very pleasant."

"You should go and live in Utopia then, if you want everything to be made very pleasant for you."

"I should indeed; only I don't know whereabouts it lies."

A very good man was the Colonel. He liked to provoke me to speak freely with him, and never betrayed the slightest impatience when I retorted; but on many subjects we thought alike. An assistant of the Account Office had accompanied Peel's brigade against the mutineers as a police-officer, I think. He brought back with him various articles as booty, such as gold and silver

ornaments, silver-plate, shawls, brocades, velvet *chidurs*, worked with gold, and the like. He held a market of these in the office, and many were the purchasers. I did not buy anything. This was observed, and the Colonel, who came in, asked "Why?"

"I don't know, sir, how these things have been come by."

"Why, they have been taken from the mutineers red-handed, I suppose."

"Or possibly from people who were called mutineers that they might be plundered?"

"Now, now, that is very uncharitable, surely. Do you think that a party of Englishmen, with an educated, kind-hearted English officer at their head, could be guilty of such a dereliction of duty as that?"

"Well, I don't know what to say. English officers in cold blood would do nothing so brutally unjust, I know; but they are demons when their blood is up, and this the mutiny has proved uncontestedly everywhere. People have been hanged and shot to death who were no more mutineers than you or I, and whose only misfortune was that they came across the avenging parties by accident. Just look here, Colonel; here is a nose-ring, an ornament used only by females. Do you mean to say that there were females fighting among the mutineers?"

"No; but the trinket was doubtless found among property belonging to the mutineers; how come by they knew best."

"Or may be it was torn off by the avenging army from the nose of some poor woman who did not know where to fly for protection."

"Ah! you are a poet, with a fine, vigorous imagination,

and will doubtless give us your version of the mutinies in an epic by and by."

"Full of stories more dreadful than those told by Ugo-lino? No; the governors would not like anything of that sort coming from the governed. I should be set down as a mutineer myself if I attempted it.¹ We must leave it to Englishmen to tell the story for us, and my confidence in Englishmen is so great that I have no doubt that, sooner or later, the tale will be most faithfully told."

"I thank you indeed for the compliment," said the Colonel; "you are the most queer native that I have known."

¹ This actually occurred to the author on a later day. The publication of *Shunkur* gave great offence to no less an individual than a Member of the Secretary of State's Council. But the author, having "nothing extenuated, nor set down aught in malice," was well content to be judged by the statements he had made.

CHAPTER XXXII.

BEGGARS ON HORSEBACK.

SET a beggar on horseback and he will ride to the d—l, says the adage. True; but then, who is to blame that he does ride so? Not the beggar surely, but he who places him on horseback.

There was such a beggar in our office—an Englishman of exceedingly rough manners. His antecedents are not known to me. He had been a schoolmaster, and was picked up for the office on being turned out from the school, under the impression that a pedagogue must necessarily be a dab at figures. They made much of him because he was English-born, though in reality his stupidity was as dense as granite. Besides this density he had some other recommendations. His partiality to the bottle once brought him into a serious scrape. He had been summoned to attend the High Court as a juror, and had there committed a nuisance—the cat may as well be let out of the bag—he had **** in the jury-box. The Judge was furious; but after a severe lecture he contented himself by imposing a fine of Rs. 50, if I remember aright. This was the man, sirs, who found favour with an Accountant imported from the deserts of Cobi; and they made him—well, never mind what they made him; they placed him on horseback.

He was an altered man at once. No one who spoke to

him without a preface of three salaáms was ever looked at. He issued orders after orders like the Czar of Russia, and the assistants subordinate to him had to codify those, and append to them an alphabetical index for prompt reference. Written replies to his questions not submissively worded were returned as incomplete and impertinent; verbal replies were arrogant if not interlarded with the word "sir" after every five words. One day an assistant *not* subordinate to him was going down the staircase when he was coming up. The assistant, though a "nigger" and on small pay, had made no salaám.

"You there, why don't you make your salaám to me? Do you know who I am?"

"Yes, I know you very well; but there is no salaáming order in force in this office."

"Will you make your salaám to me, or not?"

"I shall consider and let you know."

"Will you make your salaám now, on the spot?"

"No, I won't."

"Very well, sir; that will do."

The eyes threatened; but the threat did not fructify. Perhaps the gentleman from Cobi who had placed the beggar on horseback was ashamed to back him in such a ridiculous squabble; and so the matter dropped.

Scenes equally ridiculous are acted almost every day in all the Government offices generally, there being no lack of indigent equestrians in any of them. One fellow, an East-Indian, but placed in authority, enters a room where he finds a poor clerk, who has just come to office quite weary, seated on his chair. The clerk had not risen from his seat; why should he? he is occupying his own seat, and is doing, or is about to commence, his own work.

"Why don't you rise from your seat when I come in?"

What is the man to do? His position does not allow him to ask in return, why he should? He is therefore obliged to render the homage required of him.

I remember having once witnessed a different scene, which I record here with pleasure. A native assistant used to wait in the portico every day till the head of the department, a European, came to office, when he would make him three humble salaáms and then go about his work. This went on for some days without any remark. At last the great man could hold out no longer. He sent for the assistant into his own room, and asked him why he salaámed to him in that manner every day. "Either you take me for an ass whom you fancy you can easily buy over by your meanness, in which case you are a knave; or you are an ass yourself and do not know what you are about. Now take care that I do not catch you at this trick again; for if I do, I will degrade you."

Another scene of a different sort may also come in here for want of a better place to put it in. One European Registrar was a little deaf, and used always to place his open hand behind the ear when listening to anything attentively. A native assistant took into his head to imitate him in this, possibly expecting that that would please the great man. He found out his mistake soon.

"God d—n you, sir!" exclaimed the pious Registrar; "why do you put up your hand in that way? I do it because I am deaf; you are not deaf, you blockhead."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THIS PICTURE AND THAT.

I HAVE depicted some drunkards before. I shall here give the life of another representative specimen of the class. Judoo was the son of a poor widow, and was known from his earliest days as a very nice young man. Fathers singled him out as a model for their children to imitate. "He has nobody to look after him, yet see what a good boy he is reckoned at school. If you can only be like him, I would be fully satisfied." Such, or similar, were often the confidential exhortations of many a parent to his son. This young man, the pride of his mother, in whom all the affections of her widowed heart were centred, left school with credit, got into a Government office, and for a long time pursued a steady and exemplary life. Promotion follows steadiness—at least often, if not always; and Judoo got on pretty well in life—very well indeed for one of such poor parentage. Unfortunately, he got into an office in which there were pickings to get besides pay, and these fluctuating additions to his income undid him. The d—l's fee does not come in for nothing. It was something distinct from his salary, and did not find a place in his regular accounts. How was the money to be spent? He was no longer a young man now; the heyday of life had already gone by: but the man who had been strict in his morals in his youth, now that he was the father of

several children, was not ashamed to frequent the shops of infamy. One crime brought with it another ; the company he had chosen could only be endured under the fumes of brandy or usquebaugh ; the bottle therefore stepped forward where it was so absolutely needed.

And now he found his perquisites too small to keep pace with his habits. There was first, his light-o'-love to maintain ; and next, a supply of spirits and necessary accompaniments to be found every night for self, her, and such others, her friends, as she chose to bring in. The pickings in the office could not cover all this expenditure. The comforts hitherto allowed to wife and children began therefore to be curtailed. But still ways and means did not square ; debts began to accumulate, and the interest that had to be paid for them only made the difficulty still greater. The consumption of liquid-fire began also to increase : and at last the office accounts were tampered with, which upon discovery was visited with dismissal.

Income and pickings both gone, how was this man now to live ? The widow-mother died broken-hearted ; the wife from comparative comfort descended to wretchedness ; the children were utterly neglected, and grew up corrupt almost from their youth ; while their father dangled after the rich, helping them in their vices, and living on their charity. Was brandy given up ? No. One son was killed in a brawl in an empty-house ; another convicted of burglary and imprisoned. Fearful was the visitation of the Most High ! Do we always read them aright ?

As a counterpart to this picture I shall give that of another widow's son, who started life under still poorer circumstances. Yes, this widow was very poor indeed ; she went from house to house in her neighbourhood to

collect for her son, perhaps for herself also, the leavings of rice and curry in the kitchen; and also for torn clothes and torn shoes! Her son received no education—absolutely none; all her exertions were barely able to keep body and soul together; and when he had become a big lubberly boy, he entered the engineering school. Very little scholastic attainments were required in those days for the study he selected; he learnt his profession well. Even at that time he was propped up by the collections of food and clothing made by his mother from house to house. On one occasion she came to me with a most woeful countenance to say that her son must go to school barefooted unless I could give her a pair of old shoes. He is now an assistant-engineer, I believe, and contemplates giving up the appointment, to open out a professional career for himself independent of State support.

Take another instance. A young widow with two children, a boy and a girl, came to Calcutta from the mofussil to see what could be done for them. She took service with a rich family as a menial-servant, worked with extra zeal to win favour, and succeeded. Her boy was taken in hand by the head of the family, and received an education along with his own children. He benefited by it sufficiently to be able to retain a good appointment which his patron's exertions obtained for him, and was in time able to secure a fortune and position for himself.

These instances are not ideal. In the first case the bottle seared up all the promises of early life. In the second and the third, the opening prospects were not half so hopeful as in the first; but Ahriman was not allowed admittance, and the design of Ahoormazd bore fruit.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE LAST.

As an assistant in favour, I had occasionally to dance attendance on the higher covenanted officers of the department at their private residences, and this gave me an opportunity to observe their modes of living attentively. It is well known that they all live in grand style when their families are with them ; but I observed that when the Mem Sáheb was away they lived very poorly indeed. Of one gentleman the sleeping cot was more wretched than the one I use, nor had he more than half-a-dozen chairs in his house, the whole furniture of which was as ricketty as could well be conceived. Nor was this an isolated instance. Altogether, it seems to me that the native mode of living is, on the whole, not less expensive than the English mode *minus* Mem Sáheb's expenses on finery, education of the children in England, and the charge for wines. The beef and the *moorgee* may cost a trifle more than fish and vegetables ; but the waste of cooked food in native families is something awful, as each member is served separately, and what remains on the platter of one cannot be transferred to that of another, nor be taken back into the kitchen. Perhaps not less than one-fourth of the food cooked comes thus to be thrown away. The charge for clothing would probably on both sides be also found to be equal, or nearly so. It is true that the

Báboo goes about half-naked. But his shawls, and *pugrees*, and *kincobs* cost a deal more than the shirts and coats of Mr. Brown; and, even including Mem Sáheb's finery, the gold and silver trinkets of Gokool Moni run up the expenses of Rám Bose to a very heavy amount. Of course old Brown has to pay a large sum of money for house-rent, while Rám Dádá occupies the little fort his ancestors built a few years after the Flood, on which he has never laid out more than twenty rupees a year in repairs. But the original outlay on "Castle Dangerous" must have been pretty considerable, and the interest on that money, if it does not quite come up to the monthly disbursement of Brown, is still a good set-off against it. Brown's extravagance on wines is well known, against which Rám Churn, if orthodox, has nothing to show beyond the eight annas a month he pays for his tobacco; but his hopeful, Mr. Bose, promises to run up the expenditure under this head in a short time; and then the accounts will probably be squared on both sides, provided the present practice of Rám Bose, Siboo Bose, and Hurro Bose congregating together under the same roof, is simultaneously abandoned. The go-ahead generation is fighting hard for an equality, and will have it—in respect to expenses at least. They already call their thrifty fathers "pigs," classing themselves doubtless under the head of "monkeys." The pig has the reputation of being a stupid animal, and the monkey that of a devilish clever one; but naturalists will observe that species vary, and this our learned Bánorejees and Hanumánjees may as well take a note of.

"What! Do you take me for a Bengali Báboo that you dare to ask *buxis* from me?" inquired one of these extra-civilised exquisites of an audacious chuprássi who

had ventured to make his salaám to him, and to hold out his hand at the same time for a *párbooni* present.

"O no, sir! O no! I know that you have become a *Belátee Koothá* now, and beg your pardon for having asked anything un-English of you."

Whether this blind and undiscriminating imitation of English vices and peculiarities is advancing or throwing back the best interests of the country, is a moot-question, well deserving of more careful consideration from Indians than it has yet received; and it does appear to me to be high time now to give it such consideration without further delay.

I have spun out these reminiscences much longer than I intended. A contribution of this nature can, of course, be protracted to any length; but I am very averse to take advantage of that circumstance. Enough, says the adage, is *as good* as a feast; my comment on the text is that Enough is *better* than a feast, and, as the reader has had enough of my notes and lectures, our parting for the present is well-timed.



